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THE

WAY OF ESCAPE

Adams & Porter, Propr.

FROM

TEMPORAL EVILS

AND

FROM ETERNAL DEATH.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY JAMES B. DOW,
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PREFACE.

The following little work had its origin in a desire to see Christians generally, adopt a higher standard of duty, and from the belief, that if they would lay aside the points unessential to salvation about which they differ, put away sectarian strife and party controversy, and with one mind and one heart, join together to pull down the strong holds of sin, they would more effectually serve their Master. The great enemy of their souls places in their way these bones of contention, that he may secure their perdition; and when he cannot do that, that he may mar their usefulness, and prevent their giving their strength to the service of their Saviour in winning sinners to the paths of life. If Christians were willing that others should worship God according to the dictates of their consciences, satisfied to call all brethren who worship him in spirit and in truth, and would show themselves ready to unite with any who are looking for sal-

vation through the same Saviour in extending the limits of his kingdom; then, should we speedily see a captive race, set free from the galling chains of their cruel oppressor, and the kingdoms of this world would be soon embraced in the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And peace and happiness, with good will, would then universally prevail on the earth, while the hopes of a better world would but increase the blessedness that might then be expected in this.

I wish all who have felt a Saviour's love, whose hearts have been softened by the influences of his Spirit, all, who have in any measure been moulded after this pattern of excellence, and who desire to follow humbly in the steps he has marked out for them to walk in, to consider the great depths of misery to which mankind have been reduced by their transgression. And let them remember that great as the miseries are which they endure in the present life, that these are but a weak figure, to represent the intense, accumulated wretchedness of the world to come. I have endeavored to urge upon the consideration of Christians, the claims their unrepentant fellow sinners have up-

on them for sympathy and assistance, and to persuade them to set about fulfilling those claims.

I have attempted to show the disciples of Jesus that the means are in their own power, by which a world of wo may be made a happy residence for a regenerated race; and that nothing is wanting, but their own efforts, to bring about the happy time, when all the promises of prophecy shall be fulfilled in the diffusion of felicity throughout the now troubled earth, and when the hope of a blessed eternity shall fill up the prospect of each of the dwellers on its surface.

I have tried to make it apparent, that their own comfort in this life will be in proportion to the prevalence of true religion, and that their own pleasures will be enlarged in the same measure, in which they are made instruments of its extension: and especially, that their own spirituality of mind, and of course their peace and joy in religion, will be advanced, and their eternal happiness increased according to their present faithfulness in doing *his* will, who has purchased for them at such an expense to himself, the redemption upon which all their hopes of future blessedness are based.

I have endeavored to place before them what others have done, that they may be stirred up to follow their example; and I have referred to the success of others, and to the faithful promises of God, for their encouragement in the great work which lies before them.

But, they must remember, that it is, indeed, a great work, calling for their constant, untiring efforts; but, if attempted in earnest prayer and with a confiding faith, they will find they have upon their side the power of that mighty arm, before which, every difficulty will vanish.

I must however acknowledge, that I have not accomplished what I desired to do, or at least, have not done it as it ought to have been done. In looking over what I have written, I cannot but feel that it is a feeble attempt; but the importance of the subject remains undiminished, and I cannot but hope it may do some good.

CHAPTER I.

THE STATE OF MANKIND.

What a wretched world do we live in! How much unhappiness is there around us, who dwell in the most favored portions of the earth! If we go East, or West, to the North or to the South, we shall find the misery of mankind increasing, and increasing the faster, the farther we go from our own happy home. A home happy indeed it is compared with the far distant and benighted pagan lands, where to live would appear to us, could we really be made sensible of their degraded state, to be but another name for suffering; it would seem to us, could we for a few days exchange lots with the miserable inhabitants of those countries, that an existence there, must be too wretched to be endured; that life must be too great a burden to be borne. And we should hasten to rid ourselves of it were it not that in doing so, we must plunge into that horrid abyss, where we should find our miseries increased to such an infinite degree, that all the

pains of this life would appear like unsubstantial froth as compared to them. Ah, wretched men, who must ever be suffering while they live, and cannot die but to increase their wretchedness!

And is there no way of escape? Alas, there is none. What! has there been no Saviour provided? Yes, an all-sufficient Saviour has appeared; but hard-hearted Christians will not send them the glad tidings.

And, can that be? will they not, indeed? And why?

Oh! they like to make a show before their fellow mortals; they prefer to indulge in luxuries and in sloth; they think it is better to scrape together some heaps of glittering dust, rather than attend the cry of perishing millions. Therefore, must these multitudes go down to the pit without hearing of a Saviour. Therefore they can have no hope of deliverance from the miseries which they now endure.

The good man in his affliction, when the darkest clouds hover over his prospects in this world, can still look forward to the grave as a place of refuge. "There the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest;" and he may go on in the words of Job to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he

shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy my body, yet in my flesh I shall see God." And with the Apostle, as the crowning happiness in his expectations, he may say, "I know I shall like him for I shall see him as he is."

Yes, the Christian can look forward to the time when he shall be like his Saviour: when like him he will be pure and holy: like his Saviour, he will enjoy happiness equal to his holiness, and his life will be as lasting as his happiness is great. Is it not a boon—should it not be a comfort in every affliction, to look forward to that change which shall free us from sorrow, as it shall free us from sin, which, either in ourselves or in others, has been the source of all our wo! And if in setting us free, we shall be made perfectly holy and perfectly happy, and shall go where we shall be surrounded by beings as free from sin and as free from pain as we shall be ourselves, should not the sorrowing Christian welcome the change with joy? Perfect holiness and perfect happiness, and that too, for eternity! It is surely a boon for which to be thankful to God through the blessed Saviour who has purchased it for us.

But the poor heathen know not this Redeemer. The grave is to them no refuge from trouble. They go to corruption; but it is only a stage in their road to the bottomless pit. This road has been thronged for ages by millions at a time, crowding one another through it on their way to destruction. Generation after generation have been hurrying on, with scarce an attempt made to check their progress. How many more must rush through the wide gates, before Christians set themselves in earnest, with one mind, and with one heart, to stop the mighty flood, to open to the poor pagan in every land, the hopes of eternal happiness, and to put some check to the outpouring of misery to which they are subjected in this present world!

But in Christian countries, there is surely misery enough. What the most polluted of heathen lands appears to us, even such, must the most enlightened of Christian countries seem to the holy and happy inhabitants of heaven; it must appear, as it is, compared with the purity and bliss of their own habitation, a spot stained with sin and marked by wo. Yes, there is wretchedness enough in every land though called by the Saviour's

name; but, what is that, compared with heathen wretchedness!

It is nothing strange with us to see a mother nursing a feeble infant through months of weary, watching nights and days of anxiety and care, and at last, mourning bitterly if the delicate little thing is taken from her. We see the sick relative tenderly taken care of by the father or mother, the sister or the brother, by the husband or the wife, when they can hope for no other reward but the recovery of the loved one. Even when that hope is taken away, the affectionate relative or friend is untiring in attendance, is ready to neglect his own concerns to watch over his sick friend, if by any means, he can mitigate his pains or prolong the existence which is so troublesome to himself. And when the object of his cares is at length removed from his sight, he will mourn bitterly over his grave.

Such sights as this are too common to excite remark among us. It is nothing extraordinary for any one to nurse with tenderness and patient affection, a beloved relative under the tediousness and feebleness of a protracted illness. We should not think an individual deserving of special commendation, who was to do so: but, we should highly reprobate the

conduct of any one who was to do otherwise. These things are looked upon as a matter of course; and we are ready to congratulate ourselves that human nature is not yet so bad as to neglect them. Surely we should thank God that it is so: but to human nature we may not attribute it, for human nature is not thus displayed where the name of Jesus is not known.

In those countries according to the amount of moral darkness which prevails, we may see the corruption of the heart of man breaking out in different degrees of deformity: but in none of them, can we find the kindliness of relative affection, which almost universally prevails wherever the light of the Gospel shines. In some places, nay in almost every country where the darkness of heathenism exists, we may find mothers exposing their tender infants to perish from cold and hunger, or perhaps, even strangling them with their own hands to rid themselves of the trouble of taking care, even the little care heathen mothers ever take, of their poor babes. Or, we may see the little helpless things thrown into a river or into the fire to die a sacrifice to devils, the parents giving the fruit of their body for the sin of their souls. There too may we see the son rising

upon the parent in his old age to drive him from his dwelling to die of famine, or, half burying him in a pit, stamp with his foot the small remainder of life from the author of his own being. There too may we see the brother, like Cain the first murderer, rising upon his brother to put him to death; and we shall find there is no bond of affection, no tie of kindred, which man will not break or disregard in accomplishing his own selfish purposes.

And if things are different with us, how thankful should we be for that Gospel which alone has made them so! Just in proportion as that is felt, do we find the kindly relations of life overcoming the selfishness of the heart. Just in that proportion, will brethren be united in love; and, as parents will be faithful to their children, so will children honor and cherish their parents; in the same degree, will husbands and wives dwell together in mutual affection and confidence, and the claims of neighborhood and friendship, of patriotism and philanthropy, will be felt and regarded. There we see man can pity the unfortunate, is ready to relieve the distressed; he can sympathize with the afflicted and will reach forth his hand to bind up the broken heart.

Now knowing this to be the influence of the Gospel, it would be natural to suppose, and we should suppose if we did not know facts to the contrary, that only those would exhibit such amiable traits of character who have felt the influence of that Gospel upon their own hearts. But it is not so. There are many kind parents, dutiful children and affectionate friends, who are yet unrenewed; whose spirits have as yet refused to submit to the Father of Spirits. Yet, it is not the less to the Gospel, they owe all their good feelings towards one another. To that, they are indebted for their knowledge of right and wrong; to that they owe it, that so high a standard of morals prevails in the community in which they dwell, and which, but for that Gospel would be a community of heathen; and they would be, as their forefathers were, dark-minded and hard-hearted pagans without understanding, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.

How thankful then should we be to God, who has given the Gospel and cast our lot under its shadow: and how much must this circumstance aggravate the condemnation of those, who have enjoyed its influence upon the hearts of their kindred and upon their own hearts by inclining them to each other, when,

in those same hearts, they will allow no place for their benefactor himself. Surely our own reason tells us, in confirmation of the words of Revelation, that those who neglect God while living under the light of the Gospel, and in the daily enjoyment of those blessings which that dispensation has produced by its influence upon all our social and domestic relations, that those, are committing a greater sin against God and will bring upon themselves a more dreadful sentence when judged by him, than the vilest of the heathen who have never known there was any Saviour.

It is hard to persuade a worldly man, who is honest and upright in all his dealings, faithful in the performance of his social and domestic duties, perhaps benevolent and kind towards the poor and distressed, that he is more wicked than the ignorant pagan, who spends his life in acts of rapine and murder. But is it not so ? the poor heathen sins against the light of his own conscience ; the nominal Christian neglects God, in spite of the illumination of Gospel truth. The one has, to guide him, the feeble glimmering of an almost expiring taper ; which, however, still gives some light, and of course is enough to condemn him if he walks not according to that

light; the other has, or may have, the brightness of the noonday sun to illumine his path, showing him how to avoid every obstruction, and to surmount every difficulty. If then a man is to be judged according to what he has and not according to what he has not, must not the condemnation of the last be an hundred fold as great as that of the first, if he refuse to walk according to the light which he possesses.

The dweller in the Christian land may despise the poor heathen, and scorn to have his own acts compared with his. He may feel himself to be a better man, because his outward conduct less flagrantly interferes with the happiness of his fellow creatures; but in the sight of God, who reads the heart, he is not a whit holier, unless he makes the word of that God the rule of his life. He is more wicked, inasmuch as his bosom is black with ingratitude for favors which the other has never received. He may congratulate himself upon the affections of his family and friends, and upon the feelings of his heart towards them; but if there is no place found in that heart for gratitude to the Saviour who has made his relations to differ from those of the poor heathen, he is worse than the other, and must take a

lower place in hell at last. From the pit will he be ready enough to cry to God for deliverance; but then it will be too late. God would hear his call now; but then he will not. He may then say in his anguish, with more reason than the afflicted patriarch had to say it, "Oh, that I might have my request; that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand and cut me off. What is my strength that I should hope? or what is mine end that I should prolong my life! Is my strength, the strength of stones; or is my flesh of brass?" Stones and brass could not endure that fire to which the ungodly will be condemned; yet will it have no power to destroy them; the prayer for annihilation like every other prayer, will then be vain.

But it is not himself alone that the sinner injures by his impenitence; but also his relatives and friends, the community in which he dwells, and all who come within the influence of his example. All these he is encouraging to walk on in the way to hell. But further, it is not the impenitent only who receive harm; neither is it with regard to their eternal interests alone that any suffer injury.

The true Christian helps to establish a character for the community in which he dwells, not only because his own character is a component part of that of the public, but alas, because his opinions have an influence upon all around him, by creating in them proper views of right and wrong: and if he is respected, as the consistent Christian always must be, the desire of his approval will cause many to pursue a course of conduct to secure it, to which they would not have been actuated by any other motive. In this way is a Christian community preserved from much vice, and from the misery which must consequently grow from vice.

In like manner, he who is not a decided Christian, though he may be amiable in his character and correct in his general deportment, by the lower tone of his sentiments bearing upon all within the reach of his influence, lessens the standard of morality among those with whom he dwells. He does the more injury perhaps in this way, from the fact that he does not himself give in to any vice which might operate as a beacon for the warning of others. It is seldom that the Christian himself does not, in some degree, feel this influence depressing his own high standard of

moral obligation and religious requirements. It is very difficult to prevent the opinions of those we love, and in general respect, even when we know they have not submitted their hearts to God, from having some influencc upon our views.

Thus it is that the ungodly dweller in a Christian land, encourages sin with those among whom he lives: in this way he prevents his Christian friend from effecting so much good, as, but for his own lower tone of feeling, he would have done. And thus we see vice still prevailing where the Gospel is preached: and we find, of course, its natural accompaniments attending upon it, and bearing not only upon the vicious themselves, but discomforting all who dwell in the same borders. And so it is, that there is such an amount of unhappiness even in Christian lands, that this world, judged by its fairest samples, is still a world of wo.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE WAYS TO BE UNHAPPY.

THIS world, then, as we concluded in the last chapter, is a world of wo.

And why is it so?

The answer is very plain; it is because of SIN.

But may it not yet be a happy world?

It cannot so long as it is sinful. But it may be changed.

Why may it not? In its natural parts it is still beautiful. Has not our Creator provided every thing for our comfort, and granted us faculties for enjoyment? Sin has not so altered nature but that it is still a beautiful world; and Jesus Christ has opened a way by which man may yet be happy in this life, looking for a better inheritance beyond the grave.

With what wonderful faculties has man been endowed! faculties which, were his heart right with God, would be improved by each one, for his own happiness and for the happiness of those about him; but which, are now more frequently abused, and thus made to produce misery for himself and to extend it to others.

Of course every man suffers not only for his own misdeeds, but also for the wickedness of other men, and that generally, in proportion to the nearness of his connection with them : and yet there is no one, however distant, that if in any way, directly or indirectly, we have intercourse with him, but we may be injured by his sins. And so connected are mankind with each other, and by such various links, forming together so diversified and so endless a chain, that we cannot say that there is any individual, however remote from us, or however apparently disconnected with us, whose conduct does not, in some indirect way, have an influence upon our happiness. So it is, that our social relations, like the conductor of an electric machine, passes the effects of sin from one to another through the whole circle of the species. So it is, that, in those communities from which God has withdrawn his presence, men go on marring the happiness of each other ; and misery still goes on increasing, till life at last appears but a continuation of wretchedness. And thus it is that whole nations, are so living in this world, that when they are removed to the certain torments which await the ungodly in another, they are but removing from one stage of misery to another.

Look at reason, that noble gift of God which places man in a class with the bright intelligences of Heaven, and which, even assimilates him to their Creator and his Creator, so that he is said to be made in the image of God: look at that precious endowment and see how it is abused and perverted. When rightly used, how much happiness might it bring to each individual, and how much does it enable him to diffuse around him; and yet, how commonly is it made to wring out to man the bitter cup of misery!

The noblest use of reason, and the one which will directly or indirectly confer the greatest amount of happiness on man in this world as well as in the next, is the exercise of the power which it gives of holding communion with the Almighty Creator: but how little is this noble privilege appreciated? Any intelligent being, not acquainted with the facts, would suppose that so mean and so feeble a creature as man, would rejoice to be allowed to come into the presence of the Almighty being upon whom he is so entirely dependent: one would think he would esteem it a privilege to speak to the good and merciful God whom he can approach as to a kind Father; that he would be glad to ask of him those things which

he needs, knowing that he will mercifully grant that which in faith we pray for. Who would not suppose that a being so base, would feel the dignity conferred by serving so great and so holy a God, thus, partaking of the employments and sharing the happiness of those superior intelligences, the holy and blessed angels who surround his throne and delight to do his pleasure. But alas! it is not so.—Man has no ambition to enjoy the ennobling privilege of communing with his Maker; he has no taste for the joys to be gained in his service. Nay, rather than endure them, he will submit to any degradation, he will take up with any pain and suffering.

It is not that his nature has no relish for an increase of dignity, or that he is insensible to the allurements of happiness. He is keenly alive to the first, and the last is the professed aim of all his actions. Let a peasant be admitted to the presence of his prince, and he immediately feels an accession to his importance, and will make his boast of it through the remainder of his life: his neighbors will eagerly inquire and drink in with greedy ears his accounts of each word spoken, and of every look and motion of the great worm whom they think it is such a privilege to see

and hear. If he has been allowed to ask and receive a favor, what an addition to his pleasure does it make! The merest trifle receives a value before unknown, in consideration of the source from which it comes: a cup of water from the hands of his superior, is sweeter than honey to the lips of the aspiring clown. If he is allowed to perform some service, he is overpaid by the satisfaction of doing it for his prince, though he reap no other reward. Let a man, thus exalted for a while above his fellows by circumstances over which he had no control, go out into the crowd, among men perhaps his superiors in every mental and moral endowment; and let him express a wish, and then see the eagerness with which all will hasten to accomplish it; how will they strive with each other for the privilege of performing the service, and with what envy will the rest look upon the too happy wight who attains the coveted honor! And if one is admitted to the band of courtiers whose peculiar business it is to serve the great man, how much is his dignity enhanced by the advancement!

But into the presence of the all-powerful and eternal God, man feels it no such privilege to enter: the Prince of our Salvation he finds no pleasure in serving: he does not think it any

accession to his dignity or his happiness to be classed with the pure, exalted, and ever-blessed spirits who surround the throne of Jehovah, and who make it their business, as it is their delight, to do his will. No, the reptile prefers to crawl in its native dust to soaring aloft on the wings of a Seraph: to associate with his fellow worms is more pleasing to his taste, than to company with angels and archangels, or to commune with the Most High himself: he will choose to join with brutes, and be a partner in their pleasures, rather than partake the exalted enjoyments of superior beings. With the fierce hound he will delight to chase the timid, helpless deer, and to torture and slay the gentle creature, regardless of the big tear which, in its hour of agony, rolls down the face of the poor brute, appealing to his mercy: but he has little relish for the angelic, the godlike pleasure of seeking out distress to relieve it, of binding up the broken heart, or giving support to the crushed spirit of an unhappy fellow creature. Though he will not unite with happy hosts of heaven in praising or in serving God, he will join the false fiends of Hell in striving to dishonor his Maker, and, like them, will lift his puny arm in rebellion against him.

And is it strange that God should allow such a subject to make himself unhappy! Is it not rather strange, that his Providence should be continually at work to restrain the full tide of misery which the creature in his folly would bring upon himself? Wonderful, wonderful is the goodness of our God, displayed in his long suffering and forbearance to his creature, man! and oh, how much more wonderful, the mercy and grace exhibited in opening a way of escape from the misery he is so ready to bring upon himself, and in sending his Holy Spirit, to urge the rebel to return to happiness! What less than an all-merciful God, could thus bear with, and be continually doing good, to such as having received the gift of reason, by which they might learn to know and be enabled to worship their Creator, have so perverted the blessing as to use the power to deny him! Who less than our long-suffering Maker, could bear to see the infidel philosopher exalting his reason to the place of God, and yet restrain his lightning from striking the proud upstart to the lowest hell!

What wonderful effects have been produced by the inventive genius with which some men have been endowed; and what a perverse use

do many make of it! The miserable, ungrateful creatures who have enjoyed this great gift, instead of humbly thanking God for it, have too frequently allowed it to puff them up till they have become so bloated with pride, as to be unwilling to allow any intelligence superior to their own. But it is well worthy of remark, that it is only your second rate philosopher, who denies a God: men who have walked in a path marked out by others, may be thus lifted up; but who has ever heard of a Newton or a Boyle, who has been an infidel! A man of original genius cannot be so. He walks before others in exploring the secrets of nature; and in every thing, he sees the hand of a superior power: he feels that God is within him and about him on every side; and he cannot deny him, even if he had not too much greatness of soul to wish it. The farther he goes in his researches, the more apparent is the wisdom and the power of the unseen, eternal Creator; and in the contrast, he sensibly feels his own littleness. The more he learns, the more he finds out how extensive is the field of knowledge before him, so that he seems but to have begun to know: the vast, unexplored, and still increasing regions above him, make him sensible of his own ignorance, and as he

goes on still growing in wisdom, he more and more feels his incapacity to make it perfect. Thus it is that we see men of the greatest minds often become the humblest Christians; and, following at a distance in the paths they have marked out, comes the proud infidel. While a Newton looks through nature up to nature's God, men of feebler minds looking through his telescope with characteristic littleness of soul, can only discover themselves in the spectrum.

But to return to the effects of man's invention. Take, for instance, the art of printing. What a noble discovery was here! It seems a very simple contrivance, and so it is when it is once known; but what wonderful consequences follow from so simple a thing! We are born, as it were, with a knowledge of the press, and are, therefore, the less disposed to notice the astonishing results of an engine, to appearance, so weak; but state its effects to a man entirely ignorant of the matter, and he would think you was endeavoring to impose on his credulity. It appears to us a very obvious mode of extending and continuing a man's thoughts; but that the means would not be likely to be manifest without a knowledge of the thing itself, is evident from the fact, that

more than five thousand years elapsed, after the creation of the world, before the discovery was made.

It has often been remarked how apparent the hand of God was in the circumstances of this discovery, happening as it did in a Christian land, at a moment when a reformation in religion joined with the revival of learning, to give peculiar interest to the age. And this mighty engine so favorably placed, how well fitted did it seem for showing forth God's glory by diffusing the light of truth among the nations of a benighted, wretched world. And, doubtless, it has sometimes been so used; but that it has been much oftener abused for the purpose of sowing the seeds of infidelity, and for the extension of vice and error, it needs but to examine the contents of our groaning book shelves to discover. It might have been improved to establish peace, good-will, and brotherly love among mankind; but on the contrary, it has been made the instrument of exciting hatred and jealousy, and of promoting strife, contention, and war. Thus an opportunity which God has granted to diffuse happiness among mankind, has been misused, and like most of his other mercies, to increase their troubles.

There is the knowledge of navigation, too, like the art of printing, best understood where the Gospel is most known. And in those countries alone has it grown into a science, so that the hardy mariner cares not for a mark upon the land or in the skies; but he fearlessly trusts himself in the midst of an ocean, apparently without shores, looking at a bit of card to direct his course; and he never fails, unless some accident prevent, to gain the desired haven. The ships going from these Christian lands to every part of the habitable globe, how fitted do they seem to carry the arts of happiness and peace to the poor heathen who are sitting in darkness and the shadow of death! The merchants and the mariners of these Christian ships, what favorable opportunities do they enjoy of letting the benighted pagan see, in their conduct, the superior excellence of the religion by which they are called! And when they thus appear, showing forth God's praise in their life and conversation, how must the servant of Jesus, who may be laboring to spread the light of the Gospel, feel his hands strengthened by their help. But when has it been so? The bloody battles fought upon their shores, by those called Christians, for some paltry advantage in commerce, have been

to the poor idolater but a poor recommendation of the Christian's God; if these men are the subjects of the Prince of Peace, who would wish to enlist under his banner? Nay, such reckless cruelty have these strangers exercised towards the natives of those lands where they have been hospitably received, as well as towards each other, and so often has it been done in the name of Jesus, that it is frequently not without good reason, that the ignorant pagan prefers his own bloodthirsty gods to the merciful Saviour whose name has been so much abused. Often has the poor Hindoo had occasion to say, It is better to submit to the galling yoke of Juggernaut, than to trust the tender mercies of the Christian's God!

And those who have gone in the garb of peace in the pursuit of gain, have done but little more to recommend the religion which they are supposed to profess. It is not strange that all whom they visit, like the poor Mexicans, should think that gold was the god they worship; and many deserve the punishment of having it poured molten down their throats. The grasping avarice, the overbearing insolence, the base chicanery, and the unrestrained licentiousness of these men, have made the name of a Christian to be a reproach in every

land where they have trafficked. No one who has not seen his countrymen abroad, and especially in half civilized countries, where they feel freed from the restraints of law, can conceive of the open turpitude and reckless wickedness displayed, I will not say by all, but by very many, who at home, maintain a decorous conduct, and secure a character for honesty and sobriety. It is not strange, then, that Christianity should be a corrupt scent in the nostrils of the deluded half savage nations, who have seen it only in such men who have passed by its name. It is not wonderful, when the faithful preacher of the word has gone forth in pity for their souls to strive for their salvation, that he should almost invariably be answered by a reference to the conduct of Christians themselves. And what can the servant of God answer? He cannot make the ignorant idolater to comprehend the difference between the real and the nominal Christian; for in the system of heathenism, such a thing as conversion and renewal of the heart is totally unknown, and all who join in the rites, are equally the servants of the idol. He cannot deny the profligacy nor the baseness of those men, whose vileness, though it may be more calculating, often exceeds the viciousness

of the drunken, boisterous, fighting sailors who accompany them, and upon whose deep degradation even the dark-minded heathen looks with pity.

The art of navigation, so capable of being used to enlighten the world, has, in this way, assisted to increase the darkness which pervades its distant parts. By its means, Christians might have lightened the bondage of their less favored fellows; but they have misused it to make more strong their fetters. It might have carried, before this, peace and happiness to the remotest corners of the earth; but instead, it has floated to them strife and contention. It has been misimproved to excite tribe against tribe, and nation against nation; it has disunited families, planted bitterness in the parent's heart, set husband and wife at variance; it has caused jealousy, ill-will, and consequently unhappiness between every variety of relationship. And it has carried millions of captives into exile and hopeless slavery. It has taught the sin and supplied the means of intoxication to many nations, who, but for the abuse of this noble art, could never have known it; and it has spread disease and death, with vice and misery, among those, who, before, were comparatively innocent and happy.

And this gift of knowledge, which has been so abused in sowing the vices of one land in every other, would it not be surprising, if it was not allowed to carry back detriment to the land from which the pestilence went forth! And it has been permitted to react, by bringing home foreign forms of wickedness, by nurturing those of original growth, in causing a fearful increase of vice and crime, and, of course, of degradation and misery. And we see in this, that God can make his best gifts to be a scourge to those who misimprove them.

If we look further, we shall see that there is no end to the inventions and improvements of man; this distinguishes him from the brutes who can go so far, and progress no farther. We are very fond of expressing astonishment and admiration at the extent of our powers. We should rather, take to ourselves shame that they have been so perverted. What portion of the material world has not been brought under subjection to man; and which part has he not used to distress his own species! There is no talent by which he can add more to his own comfort than he can by his ability to work in iron; and how has he used it! To

mould it into swords and spears, or to cast into cannon for the destruction of his kind; or, to forge it into chains and fetters, and to make bars and bolts to restrain their liberty. "Saltpetre, dug from the bowels of the harmless earth," is made to explode and destroy her sons. The precious metals, so convenient as a medium of exchange, enabling a man to carry in his pocket the supplies for a year, have been sought with such foolish avidity, as to become a curse instead of a blessing.

The vegetable world, too, over which man has gained such a command by the use of his iron instruments, is in like manner turned by his perverted mind to the destruction of the lives and happiness of his fellows. The forests afford him timber with which he constructs comfortable habitations, and from them he obtains fuel to cook his food and to protect him from the cold. But they also supply him with the means of creating navies, or of moving about on land his instruments of war; and even the pleasant houses of his fellow-men, he sometimes kindles into a flame to consume their living bodies.

The earth, too, yields her corn to his labors, and he uses it for what! To support life; for he cannot live without it. But he also joins it

with her other most essential gift of water, to destroy life; to burn up his own blood in his veins; to spread distress almost beyond the powers of the human mind to conceive; to prepare souls for eternal misery, and then hurry them into a horrid, hopeless hell. Thus we see again God's greatest mercies turned, by man's depravity, to the greatest curse.

Let us go a step further, to the animal creation, and let us us see if the same remarks do not still apply. There is the noble horse, the useful assistant in our labors and in our pleasures. The beautiful beast loathes the sight of blood; yet he is taught by his master to love the battle field; to paw impatiently for conflict; to rush headlong into it, and to tread, with his iron bound hoofs, the mangled and often living bodies of his own kind, and of his master's friends and foes. He is made to change his nature, that he may assist to gratify his owner's unnatural thirst for blood.

See the faithful dog who prefers the society of man to his own kind. His chief delight is to please his master; and he will zealously try to do it, at whatever expense of pain and suffering to himself. Now look at the savage bulldog, hanging with his death grip upon the tongue of the baited bull; or, view the fierce

bloodhound, with steady fury and unfailing instinct, following the trail of his human victim, whose flesh he will tear with his fatal fangs when he comes upon him. Can this be the same animal as the first? The same; still faithful to his master, and taught by him to torment the brute and to hunt down human beings.

In nothing is man more distinguished from inferior animals than by his forethought,—the power of foreseeing and the ability of providing for his future wants. We not only see him preparing for himself food when his hunger has been appeased, because he knows it will again return; but in the heats of summer, when the very thought of a fire is oppressive, we see him laboring to prepare wood and coal to keep him warm in the inclement season which he is conscious will again approach. And then, when all around is sheeted in snow, and the waters hardened into solid crystals, we find him laying up the ice in storehouses to alleviate the oppression of the hot weather which he is sure will, in its turn, come round again. In all this, and in thousands of like cases, man shows himself to be a being of superior order to any of the creatures around him;

for, though many of these make ready a store of food for their winter's supply, in them it is evidently the effect of instinct, of which they scarcely know the meaning; while man is actuated by forethought, awakened by the exercise of his reasoning powers.

It is very easy to perceive how this particular faculty of the mind must enable mankind to provide for their comfort and to add to their happiness. Let us see how far it has done so. It cannot be denied that human existence has been much ameliorated by its exercise, especially as regards outward circumstances; we see it in the houses we dwell in, in the clothing with which we are covered, in the food we eat, and in the medicine by which our broken health is restored; we see it in the education of the young, and in the benefits derived from our civil institutions. And we sometimes see it in the well-founded hope of better life, when a prudent forethought has made the proper preparations for eternity.

But we have a balance sheet to be examined; and what appears on the other side! We still find a large portion of man's labors expended in preparations to injure and annoy others: or, to protect himself from annoyance. In peace, we see nations getting ready for war;

and an individual will labor for years to attain skill at his weapons or with his hands, that he may the more conveniently kill or maim the bodies of his own kind. Some study that they may get ready cutting words, to discomfort such as may be opposed to them in courts of justice, on the arena of politics, or in the more bitter private quarrels. To whatever age we look, and in whatever country, we find man still busy in preparing evil for his neighbor.

But of all the inclinations and powers of the human race, none afford them greater facilities for promoting their happiness than their social dispositions; and the relations growing out of them, do form the most important ingredients of the comfort and pleasures which men enjoy in this present life. But from them, also, spring the elements of the bitterest misery to which man can here be subjected; and it is chiefly his perverse spirit which makes them so. His gregarious habits have also taught him the power of combination; and the wonderful increase of capacity thus acquired may be made subservient to the improvement of the race and to the extension of comfort and happiness among them. Men know this, and knowing it, combine as often to bring destruc

tion or distress upon their species as they do to promote their own welfare.

If, then, man's powers of reasoning, his ingenuity, his forethought, his control over matter and over the instincts of the vegetable and animal creations; if his social dispositions and thousands of other capacities of mind and body, which his Maker has mercifully bestowed upon him for that purpose, may be improved to increase his happiness, as they doubtless may; and if, instead of using them to that end, he makes them instruments of lessening his means of enjoyment, is it not reasonable to conclude that he prefers pain to pleasure, distress to comfort, and that he likes afflictions and sorrow more than ease and contentment!

We know that such a conclusion would be utterly at variance with our experience and with all we know of the feelings and character of our species. There is no man but prefers enjoyment to suffering. It is not, then, that he loves pleasure less, but that he loves sin more.

Or we may say each one wishes to increase his own felicity, and is willing to do it at the expense of his neighbors; and, as they are influenced by the same wish, and act on the same

principle, he suffers a deprivation of enjoyment from the execution of their plans, even as they do from the fulfilment of his.

In short, man's heart is utterly depraved, and the main feature of that depravity is selfishness. But it is a blind, shortsighted, miscalculating selfishness. It keeps the mind ignorant of the fact, that if the general mass of happiness was increased, the share of each individual must be greater. Our own observation will teach us, what our reasons would lead us to suppose, that the comfort of all around us adds to our comfort, and the wider the happy circle extends, the more happiness does it produce to all within it. It needs no argument to prove that the well-being of friends and kindred must add to any man's felicity, nor, that the welfare of a community or of a country, increases the means of enjoyment to all who dwell within their borders: and in the same manner, would a happy world make happy all who dwell upon its wide circuit.

If then a man could attain true wisdom, which he cannot while selfishness continues to occupy his heart; but if he could, that wisdom would lead him to forget the insignificant indi-

vidual who now occupies so much of his attention; and supposing his ultimate object still to be the happiness of himself, he would set himself to work to add to the enjoyment of all around him, of his friends, of his fellow citizens, of his countrymen, and of the whole human race, extending the circle of his happy influence to the amount of his ability; and he would not fail to reap the delightful fruit of his labors, in an overflowing cup of pleasure to himself.

But it is useless to think of such a thing. The Ethiopian will change his skin, and the leopard his spots, before the heart of man, while unrenewed, will learn wisdom. Every one, will have his own particular plans to execute, and he will not believe but that the affairs of his little self are of more consequence than the concerns of the world beside. Some other remedy must then be sought, or, mankind will still go on increasing their wretched lot, crowding one another, and heedlessly rushing themselves still deeper into the vale of misery.

Of this most desirable remedy, and the means of application, I purpose to speak in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE REMEDY FOR EVILS.

It cannot be denied that there is an immense accumulation of wo entailed upon mankind. And, that a very great proportion of it is needless, that is, not necessarily connected with their residence in the world, is, I think, equally apparent. The bulk of mankind endure an immense amount, and all, even the most favored, suffer a considerable portion of temporal evils from which it is possible for them to be relieved; and those which cannot be removed, it is evident may be very much lightened by an assured hope of a change to that better state of being in which sorrow shall be unknown.

And as the fact is established, so is the cause well known; no one can deny without contradicting the evidence of his senses, that suffering is the consequence of sin. Now the best method to remedy an evil, is evidently to remove the cause: therefore, if you can eradicate their sin, you can give happiness to mankind: so far as you can lessen their iniquities, in the same proportions will you lighten their load of misery; and so far, will you help to ameliorate the condition of the race.

Now, the well known and the only remedy for sin and its consequences, is faith in the blood of Jesus Christ: and this faith, is to be applied by the simple means of preaching his Gospel. Let this once be carried home to every heart, and what a happy world may this be! The dwellers on it when they shall no longer delight to trouble and distress each other, will be delivered from the mass of suffering which now so heavily bears them down; selfishness quelled in the human heart, each will seek, not his own, but another's weal. And each, shall find himself richly repaid by the full tide of happiness returned into his own bosom. Even death will then cease to be an evil; for why should we fear that which will only remove us to a happy heaven; and why should we mourn over friends who may go before us to their God and our God, in whose presence we shall have the full assurance of soon meeting them again with increased and still increasing joy!

The world has been changed by sin in all its parts; but it is chiefly over the moral portion, that it has passed with a blighting influence. If that was made right, the natural world would still afford abundant means of enjoy-

ment. Though man might continue under the sentence to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, yet, if viewed in its proper light, and acted on in a Christian spirit, it would cease to be a curse: it would even be a blessing, for the healthful labor necessary to provide the comforts of life, can never be a toil to a body unharassed by efforts to supply the inordinate desires of the heart. The words of the prophet may be used in reference to man's temporal wants, as well as to his spiritual, to which they were chiefly intended to apply, when he says: "Ye spend your money for that which is not bread and your labor for that which satisfieth not." Were men to seek that alone which will add to their real comfort, the command to labor, so far from causing a painful drudgery, would only lead to such a degree of effort as would develope the muscles to their full power; and the vigorous frames of men, so far from revolting at the toil, like the overworked bodies of the present race, would delight in the excitement produced by the exertions necessary to provide their daily bread.

Will it not go far to bring about that state of society which we expect will mark the looked-for Millennium, when mankind shall no more strive against their Maker by resisting

his commands and perverting his gifts: when such as have sedentary employments, shall no longer think it beneath them to raise the corn they consume, and shall reap the fruit of their toil, in health and vigor of body, and in sound and cheerful minds: when what are called the laboring classes, not being worn down by excessive drudgery, shall have abundant leisure to add to their stores of mental knowledge and time to employ for their moral and religious advancement. Would not this improvement in the habits of men, which however can never be brought about till the Gospel shall fully prevail, go far towards establishing those thousand years during which Satan shall be chained to prevent his deluding mankind, and peace and happiness shall be universally diffused. That time will come in accordance to the sure word of prophecy; and the more we endeavor to spread the elements of happiness, looking to God for his blessing, the nearer will it approach our own age and the more will our own times resemble it.

Is not our God a good God, who in his wrath remembers mercy! In his anger at man's sin he told him he must henceforth live by the sweat of his brow; and yet, but for the continued wickedness of the rebellious race,

we see that the command, if it might not be converted into a blessing, might be made a very light curse.

The very best gifts our Creator has bestowed upon us, and those the most esteemed, cannot add to our happiness except so far as they are used with moderation. And man's necessity to toil for his living, if it is turned to other purposes than those for which Jehovah imposed it, is it his fault, or is it our's, if it become a greater burden than he intended to place upon us? Let us consider for a moment some ways in which this command, obeyed in a proper spirit, may be made to promote the good of mankind, how it has been used for other purposes, and how far this change has been productive of advantage or disadvantage to man.

Our merciful Father, pitying his rebellious children, and delighting to do them good, has so ordered it, that, by our labors, we may add many comforts to our existence in this world; and there can be no doubt that the real pleasures of life may be very much increased by taking advantage of this power. There is a certain extent to which we may accumulate comforts around us, and thereby be improving our happiness. But beyond the line which

marks this ground, they degenerate into luxury; and mankind are prone to go very much beyond this line in the expectation of adding to their pleasures. And how do they succeed? One man lounges, as he goes from place to place, on the stuffed cushions of a princely chariot; and he gains a momentary gratification of his indolence; and he loses the hilarity of spirits which depend on the proper exercise of a man's own muscles, if he loses not the health which can be secured in no other way. Another adds to the abundance of his board, and provides pungent condiments to increase his appetite, that he may enjoy it to the utmost extent; and he secures his object for a while till the over-excited palate refuses to obey the stimulants, and he secures to himself disease and discomfort for the remainder of his days, and perhaps hands them down to his posterity. But when men shall be content to enjoy the comforts without luxuries, these will add only pleasure to their lives.

Again, God has enabled us to make more sure these comforts, by laying up the surplus of one year to supply our wants during an approaching year of scarcity. This capacity may most certainly be made to conduce to our happiness; but does it so to those, who, feeling

that their barns are full, allow themselves to fall into indolence till their bodies become inert and their minds torpid, so that the remainder of life is made listless and unhappy. Does it so to those who permit their abundance to tempt them to vice and dissipation, till their health is ruined, their peace of mind destroyed, and the very wealth which was their bane, is gone, leaving them to penury when it is too late to begin to labor. But especially, I would ask, does the power of providing for the future increase the happiness of those who allow a prudent foresight to degenerate into avarice; who, having an abundant provision for all their wants, are still intent upon gathering hoards which they can never use; wearing out their faculties by useless and worse than useless toil? They are like the man with the muckrake, mentioned by John Bunyan, who would not look up to the crown of glory which was offered him, but was still busying himself scraping together the sticks and straws and dust of the earth. I do not believe that, in the sight of holy beings, there is any man more degraded than he who has given himself up to the pursuit of wealth; and I do not think there is any class who enjoy so little of the present life, or feel more terror at the approach of death.

But of all the motives which impel men to drudge away their lives, there is none so powerful in its operation as the calls of the tyrant Pride. To gratify this, makind will overcome their sloth, give up their indulgencies, and make avarice itself unlock its hoarded treasures; for this men will rise early, sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness; and what do they gain? The precious privilege of raising their tiny heads and crowing just above some of their fellow worms, and next below some others. Noble ambition for an immortal being! And it fails not to reap its just reward.

If, then, I am not mistaken in my premises, the curse upon the human race does not so much consist in the necessity to labor for their bread, as it does in their perversion of the power by toiling for those things which cannot benefit them; by overtaxing their faculties to gain what not only takes from their comfort, but brings to them direct annoyance. I may have failed to convince others, but am satisfied myself that it is so; that herein consists much of the unhappiness which pervades the world, and must continue until a change in the opinions of mankind shall create other motives of action. And it is equally evident to me that these opinions can only be acted upon as the

earth becomes enlightened with Gospel truths. And then, having discarded their luxury, their avarice and their pride, men will be happy in the full enjoyment of their labor.

When we walk forth among the beauties of the natural world, does it present a scene with the marks of its Creator's curse upon it? It may not show to us the perfection that was seen before it was entered by sin; but, it is a beautiful world still, containing means of happiness which man can enjoy by using them to his Maker's praise.

If we go abroad in the spring, we see the fields covered with fresh reviving verdure; insects, in the vigor of their new existence, are enjoying the cheering warmth of the genial sun; the birds are merrily flitting through the air, or singing to their happy mates among the fragrant branches. We look at the festoons of flowers with which the trees are garlanded, and we see in them the promise of the autumn's bounty. In all, we may discover the Creator's hand and the goodness of a merciful God; and where is man who should be looking upon the scene that he may glorify his Maker! He has shut himself up in his dungeon cities, where he is grubbing for wealth. Or, if

his work lies amidst the beauties of nature, he looks not through them up to nature's God, for whom, though he is living upon his bounty, he does not care; he thinks only to how much gold the promised harvest may be converted; thus viewing another god through the great Creator's works—the god Mammon, whom alone he worships.

Men, as a body, have little enjoyment in the beauties of the natural world; they find no pleasure in the retirements where God's greatness and his goodness are most manifest, and where they may have abundant opportunities to praise him in his works; nor have they much taste for glorifying him in any other way.

But the works of their fellow mortals they are ever ready to admire; and they delight to crowd together where they have so heaped up their stiff angular piles as entirely to shut out from view the graceful operations of the Almighty's hand; and where even the rays of the cheerful sun, and the sparkling stars which adorn the midnight skies, are obscured and rendered lustreless by the smoke and murky vapors which hang in the polluted atmosphere above the thronged dwellings of the overgrown city.

The people will acknowledge that the air

they breathe is foul; that their water is impure; they complain that the vegetables they are obliged to eat are stale, and that their milk is sour; and as to fruit, they can only get an apology for the want of it. But then there is a counterbalancing advantage to be derived from a residence in the city which far outweighs all these evils. There is the best place to make money.

They will allow that their own health suffers from the deprivations and the exposure to evil influences to which they are subject; that from the same causes, many of their children early lose their lives, and those who survive, grow up puny and delicate; but, on the other hand, they are fast growing rich; and for this, they would endure much sorer evils. They are subject to a much worse consequence, though they consider it not, in this, that by their pursuit of wealth, they are shutting themselves out from the hopes of eternal happiness. They have chosen Mammon for their god, and they cannot serve two masters.

I would not intimate that it is wrong to dwell in a city, or that a man may not be happy there. It is probably necessary for mutual convenience that population should be condensed in certain places; but I cannot think

there is any advantage, except it be allowed that increase of wealth is the one thing needful; but, on the contrary, that there are many and great evils resulting from such accumulated masses as are now gathered together. In smaller communities the same ill consequences do not arise, or they do in a much less degree.

I have mentioned the subject merely to show from how much pleasure men cut themselves off, and that their views and tastes must be changed in these things before they can secure such a portion of enjoyment to themselves, as their circumstances in this world will allow them to receive. It is easy to perceive what they consider desirable, by listening to their strains of commendation. They speak of improvement in a city, and they mean an accumulation of buildings and an increase of population; as if an addition to the buz, the bustle, and the turmoil of such a place were an advantage. It is an advantage, as they consider it; —an advantage in making money. Again, they speak of the increasing prosperity of a country; and do they mean its moral improvement? No; but that it is growing in wealth and in facilities for acquiring wealth; as if these very things did not, more than all others,

threaten the destruction of all Christian lands, and especially of our own land, too much favored, while we thus abuse the favor.

Man cannot be happy till the god of this world is dethroned, and our merciful Creator restored to his proper place in the heart of his misguided creature. And for this, the Gospel is our only refuge; for man's wisdom is but foolishness without the guidance of the word of God.

During the summer's heat mankind are still wearing out their frail strength by laboring for that which cannot satisfy the soul, and the fresh invigorating breezes of winter only enable them to pursue the same object with more avidity. There is nothing more conducive to the health and comfort of the human race than the various changes in the seasons. The winter's cold and the summer's heat do not, in themselves, take from the happiness of the human race; but on the contrary, they naturally open to us many means of enjoyment. Were our inclinations moulded upon the rules of God's word, and our objects of pursuit conformed, as of course they would be, to our inclinations, our physical powers would be brought into such vigorous action that we

should be enabled to meet, without inconvenience, such changes as we now instinctively shrink from: and when brotherly love shall more generally prevail, and each shall feel more interest in the welfare of every other, the comforts and conveniences of life must become so much more equally distributed, as to remedy most of the evils now suffered by mankind from the change of the seasons. When love and good will shall become more universal, and men shall be governed by true wisdom and a sound judgment, though the distinctions of rich and poor may still continue, we shall not see one man making himself wretched by the abuse of his superfluity, while perhaps his next neighbor is suffering from want of the comforts and necessaries of life. When this change shall take place, how much will this alone increaes the happiness of the human species!

That it is not necessary that the face of nature should be changed and the seasons altered in order to insure the greatest amount of good to the dwellers upon the earth, any one may satisfy himself by comparing the state of society in those lands which enjoy a comparative equality of temperature, with what it is in

other countries where the changes are great and sudden; and by measuring the happiness enjoyed by those who are obliged to labor to secure the fruits of the earth, with that of others who have only to gather her spontaneous products. Let him also compare the energies of the one with the inertness of the other, and he will perceive that our Creator has so formed us, that our capacity for enjoyment depends in a great measure upon the character to be alone developed by the efforts, which, in the present constitution of things, we are required to make in order to secure a comfortable living in the world.

If then I am right in my suppositions, there is no change in the natural world necessary to bring about such a happy state of things as we are led to expect in the fulfilment of the prophecies of Millennial glory; but only a moral renovation and such an alteration in physical things as would be its natural consequence. Were the order of nature so changed that man should no longer be subjected to the vicissitudes of the seasons, nor obliged to labor to maintain and provide comforts for his existence upon the earth, it would be so far from adding to his happiness that it would, unless his own nature was at the same time changed,

only complete his misery. It would not tend to his exaltation in the scale of beings; but on the contrary, in a few generations it would probably degrade him to a level with the brutes.

What then is wantin to make the whole race of men happy upon the earth but that change of heart which our Saviour pronounces to be so necessary; and what can bring about that change but the blessing of God upon the preaching of the Gospel! And will he not grant that blessing to the prayer of faith accompanied with the prescribed means! He will! for he is a faithful God, and he has said it.

But I have said so much concerning the temporal happiness of mankind, that perhaps some may be led to suppose that I consider that to be the chief benefit which may be expected from bringing home the word of truth to the hearts of men. But it is far, very far otherwise. There is no one, who is not wilfully blind, but must perceive that the things of time are as nothing, and less than nothing, when compared with the vast interests of eternity. But in themselves they are not to be despised; we cannot disregard them for ourselves, and we ought not to undervalue them for others.

The Father of all delights in the happiness of each one of his creatures. He is willing they should enjoy it at all times and in every place; very properly, however, exacting obedience to his laws as the price of it. He has promised that mankind shall yet be happy upon the earth, and it is right we should desire the fulfilment of the promise, and use our endeavors, by the means he has placed in our hands, to prepare ourselves and our fellow creatures for the consummation of it. And this happiness, of which I have been speaking, is not disconnected with our future welfare; but the hope of eternal salvation must form an essential ingredient in every cup of real earthly comfort. It is this which extracts the sting of death and makes of no account the grave's boasted victory. Without this hope man can never be happy here; for he must continually feel that his bliss may at any moment be snatched from him, and the more comfortable he is in this world the more will he dread to leave it. But with the full assurance of this he can never fear to die, however happy he may be now, for he knows that he will be removed to a state where his happiness will be to an infinite degree increased; from which it will no more be changed.

How many evils will then be dispersed which are now only evils from their connection with death! If we can make the King of Terrors our friend, what else need we fear? How large a portion of the misery of life originates from this foe, who has for so long a time acted the tyrant to the human race. It is not only personal dread we suffer from him, but it is he who dashes from us every expectation of happiness, by using our social relations to which we look for our dearest enjoyments, to plant a rankling thorn in our hearts.

Who could mourn the loss of any friend who they felt fully assured had been transported to the presence of God, there to shine as a star for ever and ever? And who would fear the approach of death, which could only join them to that happy company who have gone before them, while at the same time they would feel an unshaken confidence that those whom they leave behind will, each in his turn, be removed to the same blissful society?

It is not wonderful that such as see uncertainty or annihilation in the grave, should mourn as those without hope. And those who believe the sanctions of the Gospel have still more reason to be disconsolate, when they see those they love dying unrepentant. How many

parents have had their hearts wrung with anguish when their child has been taken from them before its heart had been renewed by divine grace, and they could not but believe that their offspring's soul was lost! And what bitterness must it add to their cup, if they cannot but think their own negligence has driven their child to hell! One would think that the image of its troubled soul would incessantly present itself to their imagination, enveloped with the flames which the scriptures use as a figure to represent the torment of the damned: that when they wake in the midnight darkness, or when they dream in their sleep, they would still see the form of their offspring glowing before them like the welding iron when it is taken from the blacksmith's forge; and ah, they will then remember that though the soul will be tormented with such intensity of heat, that it is more incombustible than even the hard metal; and though its burning anguish can never be diminished through an endless eternity, it will still remain unconsumed.

Were there no other object to be gained, would it not be worthy the efforts of every benevolent mind to attempt the deliverance of mankind from the agony of such thoughts? These could no more haunt the minds of men,

if, after submitting themselves to God, they ceased to neglect, as of course they would, the charge of the souls committed to their care. Must it not add to the happiness of the human race when this rankling barb is cut off from the sting of death!

But then, death itself; the eternal, hopeless death in hell! can we be undismayed while walking in the sure road to its never-dying torments! can we, without anguish of heart, see any over whom we can exercise an influence, but especially those of whom God has given us the special charge, going towards this place of endless wo! can we see them hurrying on, and not strive to arrest their steps? Oh! the horror of horrors that will be our portion, when we shall meet them in hell and hear them upbraid us with their ruin! Oh, the piercing agony which will rend our souls, as their shrill shriek is still ringing in our ears, accusing us of leading them to that bottomless pit, whose roaring flames cannot drown their cry, nor its murky vapors hide from our view the sight of their enduring torments!

And why should men be still rushing in such crowds towards this fathomless lake of liquid fire! Has not Jesus died for all? Is not his

blood an all-sufficient ransom? He has made an atonement equal to the wants of all his creatures: it has power to redeem them from the horrid pit and to relieve them from the mass of misery endured in their painful journey towards its gates. And on the other hand, it has the power to bring them to God, the power to fit them for a residence in heaven among the pure, and happy, and loving spirits, who surround his throne; it can prepare them for the endless enjoyment of unbounded pleasures, in the immediate presence of their Maker and their Saviour. And it has the power of so smoothing their passage through this now troubled world, that when they are called hence they will be removed from a happy residence on earth to a still happier abode in heaven.

And how is this great salvation to be applied that it may be made to produce such desirable results? By the simple but faithful preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Such is the power of these apparently weak means, that if they were properly applied, as they now might be, I believe that not even the present generation would pass away till all these things were fulfilled

Who then that has any bowels of compassion

for his fellow men, who that can feel pity for the miseries of a fallen race, who that has greatness of soul sufficient to rejoice in the happiness of others, nay, who is there who is not bound up in and thinks that all the world is concentrated in his little insignificant self, but must feel desirous to do all he can for the spread and diffusion of this simple but all-powerful Gospel?

CHAPTER IV.

TO WHOM IS THIS REMEDY ENTRUSTED?

If happiness is desirable, and misery to be avoided, and if the means for the attainment of these ends are so simple, why are they not more effectually applied? To whom is it owing that the progress of the Gospel is so tardy, and that the lives of mankind are so little conformed to its model? If so much good is to be gained, so much evil to be banished from the habitations of men by this simple means, why is it not more generally spread? For whose interest is it that this Gospel should be more widely diffused?

It is doubtless the most for the interest of those who suffer the greatest share of those evils, which its general prevalence would certainly remove from the world. The most unenlightened of the heathen endure in this life the most of these penalties for sin; and of course, so far as this life is concerned, it is the most for their interest that themselves and those around them should be brought into subjection to the Gospel. But how can they believe in that of which they have not heard, or how can they teach it to others?

Would not the poor Hindoo widow, as she sees the devouring flames ascend around, rejoice to flee to this refuge from the horrid death which awaits her? Or, at least, if she must die, would she not be glad of a hope beyond the grave? Would she not be happy if she could teach it to her son—her own son, who has put the fire to the funeral pile which is to consume her living body, and thus save him from the guilt of parricide? And would she not instil the wholesome truths into the minds of her female offspring, that they may not live in the degradation to which she has been subjected; that they may tell them to the generation following, lest, in their turn, they be made to die the same horrid death which

awaits her? It is because she knows not the name of Christ, or knows it only as she sees it disgraced by those who bear it, that she cannot make it effectual to save herself and her children. Ah! who can conceive of the anguish which must rend the heart of the bereaved woman when she sees the son whom she loved and nursed so tenderly in his helpless years, with calmness and indifference, lighting the fire which is to torture and consume the body which bare him!

Suppose, again, a party of tattooed savages collected around an immense bonfire which they have lighted, to cook a repast of which they will exultingly partake. And of what is the banquet to consist, which they anticipate with so much apparent delight?—Of the roasted bodies of human victims—enemies taken in war. I have myself seen a ring of savages, dancing like so many fiends, around such a blaze, which was to prepare two of their fellow men for their infernal feast.

Now what must be the thoughts of the poor captive, who sits bound and helpless, within sight of this awful preparation! He sees the dreadful flames ascend which are to roast his flesh like the carcass of a dumb beast, to be fed

upon by his fellow-creatures; and he sees the beings rejoicing before him, who, before the sun shall set, are to pick his bones. Will he not already feel his blood drying in his veins, and imagine his bones parched by that scorching fire; and will not his flesh creep and his breath almost fail him when he thinks that, before the day shall close, the men he sees, will with their teeth, be tearing apart his muscles; and that his bones will then be carved into ornaments and kept as trophies to decorate their persons? He knows that any appeal to his enemies will be vain. Their tender mercies are cruelty, and they would only answer his cries by adding insult and derision to his pains.

Now tell the poor victim in this hour of awful expectation, that there is a method by which the hard hearts of his foes may be softened, so that instead of striving further to increase his sufferings, they would delight to bind up his wounds and wipe the tears from his eyes; and would he not cry out in an agony of hope, "Oh! bring to bear upon them this softening influence; send me, send me this great salvation!" And are not the thousands of wretches for whom such a doom is yet preparing, are they not, or are not their miseries

still uttering this cry for the blessed Gospel! The unhappy mortals might seek the way if they knew how; but who is to show them the way?

But there is a worse kind of maneaters than these,—those who feed upon the bodies of their own kindred. The public attention has been drawn to these people, from the circumstance of their having murdered lately two faithful missionaries of the cross. Governor Raffles, one of the most enlightened, as well as one of the best of the men who have ever been in power, relates of the Battas, that, as they grow old, they are devoured by their own offspring. How must the old Batta feel, as he sees the time approach when he is to find a horrid sepulchre in the bodies of his living children! They may quietly submit, as it is said they do, to a fate which custom has rendered unavoidable; but can it be that they would not be glad to find a way to escape it! They cannot help themselves, however much they may desire it; but do not their wants join in the loud cry of the millions who have not the Gospel?

Let us take one more case. We will go to the western wilds of America, to the country of the red man. We are now in the very do-

mains of cruelty. We may there see the prisoner chained at a distance from the stake, to be roasted alive by a slow fire. The stern savage, at first, sits calmly singing his death song, regardless of his scorched skin and the blood burning in his veins. You would think that he possessed no sense of feeling; but the same nerves are spread over his body as over those of his fellow-creatures; and they have the same office to convey the sensation of pain. It is that he has tasked his powers of endurance that he may not exhibit what he has been taught to consider a weakness. His enemies, mean while, are exercising their ingenuity that they may extort from him a groan; but all their efforts are in vain, for the proud son of the forest has braced his iron nerves and sets their malice at defiance; and he feels, in this last conflict of evil passions, that he is still a conqueror.

But his flesh is not iron nor his bones brass, that they should long endure that heat. His brain begins to roast, and reason, driven from her seat, a frantic fury usurps her place. He no longer sits calm and collected, but leaps up, and rushes madly round the circus marked out by the length of his chain. Now see the furies by whom the poor wretch is surrounded; see

how they exult in the madness produced by the torments they have themselves inflicted. They have painted their bodies after their own hideous imaginings, to make their outward appearance, in some measure, a representation of the dark depravity of their hearts: and now, like a band of incarnate demons in the full exercise of their pride and malice, they are delighting to inflict pain and torture upon their unresisting victim.

Take a distant view of the objects, and say, can any earthly representation more strongly shadow forth the passions, the pains, the employments, and the scenery of hell, taking the figure of unquenchable fire, used by our Saviour, to show to us its lasting torments! Here are the glowing coals, the roaring flames with their black canopy of smoke; here are figures to represent the devils and the damned spirits of wicked men, torturing each other, and in their turn enduring the torments inflicted by their companions, and the more fearful pains produced by the gnawings of their own unrestrained passions.

Now suppose the influences of the Gospel of Jesus could instantaneously be brought to bear in its power upon the hearts of this band of savages. How is the scene changed at once!

They hasten to loosen their afflicted brother from the stake; they bind up his wounds and weep over the pain, which but now, in their diabolical rage, they were inflicting upon him. And he forgives them all, forgives them freely and fully, as he hopes to be forgiven for Jesus' sake; and henceforth brethren in Christ, they will dwell together in unity and love.

Now if these deluded wretches, tormentors or tormented, could be made sensible of the blessed change which would be wrought in them by the preaching of God's word, accompanied by the influence of his Holy Spirit; if they could be convinced of the happiness it would bring to their earthly homes; and above all, if they could be made to realize the blissful heaven for which it would prepare them, would they not now eagerly cry out as with one voice, "Send us, send us this blessed Gospel; ye who have it, bring it to us."

And they who have it are going among them continually. Yes, men who profess to believe the Scriptures, and would be unwilling to have all prospect of the salvation presented in them cut off from themselves, are constantly going to the western wilderness to visit the red men. And what do they carry to the poor

savage ? The Bible to save his soul ? No, but *gunpowder* to kill his fellow men, and *rum* to murder himself with, and to make more sure the destruction of his soul. He seeks not the temporal nor the spiritual good of his fellow immortal ; but he covets the furs of the dark-minded Indian, who is willing to traffic them, for what will prove his ruin. His object is the same with that of the merchant who visits Hindostan for her silks, or China for her teas, who trades with the Cannibal of the South Seas for his sandal wood, or with the more disgusting Cannibal of Sumatra for his pepper. They are all guided by the same motive, the desire of gain, by what they consider their own interest.

And is it not for their interest that those with whom they come so much in contact, should be governed by the principles of the Gospel ? that they should become honest in their dealings and kind and Christian in their feelings ? Is it not for their interest that the tomahawk should be buried, that they may follow their lonely journey in safety ? When one falls into the river Hoogley, is it not for his interest that the gentle Hindoo should help him with his boat, as the promptings of nature would incline him to do did not his religion

forbid it, and oblige him to leave his fellow-creature to perish as an offering to his god Gunga! It would be doubtless for the advantage of every trader that each nation which he visits, should be brought under the influence of the Gospel. Is it not strange, then, that he does not strive to carry to the nations that Gospel which can produce so desirable a change?

It would be strange, were it not for another circumstance still more so; and that is, that, professing to believe the Bible to be the word of God, and knowing from it that they can enjoy no real happiness in this world except by conforming to its rules; and, above all, knowing that it has marked out one way as leading to eternal life, and, that it has shown that there is another road turning towards the broad gates of everlasting death; that, knowing all this, any should be so infatuated as to refuse to submit to its sanctions; that they should still avoid the way of life and steadily walk on in the paths which must bring them to misery and contempt.

One would think that, seeing the many sufferings which they cannot but know to be entailed upon them by their false religion, their hearts would yearn over the wretchedness of

the deceived people with whom they come in contact; and that they would improve every means in their power to deliver them from the strong bands of their delusion. Knowing that themselves and the poor pagans before them have all immortal souls, and knowing that there is a happy heaven for which they may be prepared in the present life, we might very naturally suppose that they would wish to look forward to see these many millions in the enjoyment of that place of bliss. And above all, aware that there is a most fearful hell to which all those nations are fast going down, would it not be reasonable to believe that any, possessing the common feelings of humanity, would desire that such a multitude of dying souls should be saved from the gloomy pit, especially when it is known that a way of deliverance has been provided and offered to the whole race of man!

If such feelings and such desires could be but once excited in the breasts of this class of men, what a sudden and wide-spreading change might we not soon see in the face of the moral world; how quickly would the wilderness rejoice, and the desert begin to bud and blossom as the rose! But, alas! not even the poor heathen in his blindness is more an object of

compassion than are these men in their stupidity, who have, or may have, the Gospel of salvation in their hands. Of all fields of missionary labor there is none more destitute, or that calls louder for help, than that occupied by those whom the love of gain, or any other cause, have made wanderers in the earth. There is no class more neglected by their fellow men, while, rushing madly to ruin, none require their help more than those whose business is upon the great deep.

It is not strange those will not pity the miseries of the pagan world who have, for themselves, chosen the galling yoke and the heavy bondage of sin; neither is it to be wondered at, if those who care not for the joys of heaven themselves, should feel no particular desire that others should secure them; or, being willing to take the pains of hell for their own future portion, as the penalty for having given themselves up to seek the gains or the pleasures of this world, that they should be especially solicitous to deliver any from the like fearful doom. It is for their own interest, temporal and eternal, that the nations they visit should be converted to the true faith; but if they will not think of the vastly greater im-

portance to themselves of saving their own souls, how can they be expected to be influenced by the minor consideration of the salvation of others?

We cannot doubt, then, that it is for the interest, in every point of view, of all infidels and pagans who dwell in the dark regions of the earth, that the Gospel should be universally spread. But, however much it may be for their good, it is out of their power to obtain it for themselves or to send it to others. We see that what they cannot do, the careless dwellers in Christian lands, or those who go forth from them, will not do; and that while they continue what they are, it is unreasonable to expect they should. There is but one class who can be supposed to care much for the salvation of their fellow-creatures. Those, only, who have felt the softening influences of a living faith in the crucified Redeemer upon their own hearts, can feel for the woes of their fellow men; and, looking towards a happy inheritance for themselves, they will be desirous that every child of Adam should share their blessed expectation. And when Christians shall feel as Christians should, and act as Christians ought to act, then may we expect their labors will be

crowned with success; then, may we look for the desired result, in this now lost and wicked world turning to their offended God.

But can so few accomplish so much? Collect the children of God together and see what a small and feeble band. Call together the sons of the Prince of Darkness, and what hosts are gathered against this little company! Take only the countries which are called by his name, and see how very small a part of the population are enlisted under the banners of the Prince of Peace. Even among the few who profess to serve him, how many traitors are to be found.

Suppose all the true disciples of Jesus were drawn together into one company. Suppose them clothed in white apparel, and that all the servants of the evil one in the habiliments of mourning were gathered close around them; would not the little band in white be utterly lost in the sable crowd? Suppose we could soar aloft, like the vulture of the desert, till the mighty mass of human beings could be encompassed at a glance, and then could look down, with his piercing eye, upon the congregated millions. We should see, extended far and wide, the dark vestments becoming those

who are going down to the gates of death; and the light spot in the centre, would appear but a speck in the blackened surface of the world.

What can these few do against the mighty millions arrayed against them? But we have not taken in the full view nor counted all the fearful odds. There are yet to be added to the enemies of the children of light all the hosts to be gathered from the bottomless pit, who are allowed liberty for a time, and, under the guidance of a skilful leader, are boldly and indefatigably carrying on a war against the Prince of Life, and against all who are enlisted under his banners. Of how many this army of our assailants is composed we know not, but we are sure that it is numerous, and composed of those enemies which are the most to be dreaded.

With such an accumulation of foes to oppose them, how is the little band to stand their ground; and how can they be brought to charge the close set phalanx of their powerful enemy with any hope of breaking in upon his ranks? It may be done. We have as yet seen but part of the picture, or we should perceive that there are more for us than against us. The powers of darkness may oppose us, but on our side are the armies of the living

God; nay, were these all to turn apostate and join the adverse ranks, we should be still stronger than all, in the power of the Captain of the Host. With him upon our side, it matters little who is against us.

And this mighty Chief, will *he* certainly help us? He will indeed grant his assistance, for he has said it, and his word is very faithfulness; we may be sure to conquer, for he has promised us the victory. But he has not promised, except in the use of the means which he has placed in our hands. If we lie upon our backs and beg of him to carry us to such and such a place, and will not, from indolence, use the limbs with which he has provided us to convey us thither, should we think it strange if we did not find ourselves there? or, should we think that he was unfaithful because he had promised that he would enable us to go? But if we use the powers of locomotion which he has given us, we need not fear but we shall be supported through it, though the journey be long and tedious; and that we shall arrive in due time in peace and in comfort.

It is so in the race set before us in the Gospel. There, we have not only to run well that we fail not of salvation for ourselves, but we must assist others in the way and strive to

carry all whose destiny we can influence, towards our desired haven. If we use not the means placed within our reach, and we fail to reach the goal at last, it will not be the unfaithfulness of our God which prevents us, though he has promised his assistance. But if we are not deficient in ourselves, he surely will not be wanting: and we shall arrive in safety at our journey's end, and on the way shall accomplish all we desire and all he expects from us.

And who has so great an interest as the Christian in turning the world to God? I speak not of the present or future happiness he will derive from it to himself, though in these he will not fail of his reward; for I have before shown that the temporal comfort of each must be advanced by every addition to the flock of Christ, and the consequent increase to the general mass of human happiness; and for the future we have the promise that those who turn many to righteousness shall shine like the stars forever and ever. But I would not speak now of his selfish interest; so far as his heart is sanctified, the Christian will cease to be governed by any such motive. But it is his interest to feel and to show love to the great and good Jehovah who has bestowed upon him

every blessing he has enjoyed, to the merciful God who has borne so often with his rebellion, and so many times forgiven his relapses into sin. Is it not for his advantage to feel, and to show, his gratitude for the redemption which cost the Father and the Son so much? If his heart is right, he will think and he will say, that he can never do too much to exhibit his love and his gratitude to such a good God, and to such a long-suffering, kind and merciful Saviour.

How then are we to exhibit these feelings? He has pointed out the way. If we love him, we will keep his commandments; we shall do as we would be done by; we shall strive to bind up the broken heart; we shall visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction. As he has set us an example that we may walk in his steps, we shall endeavor to follow in the way he has marked out for us: as he preached the Gospel to the poor, so shall we; and we shall not forget the poor dying heathen, remembering that but for his merciful kindness and great pity to us, we should even now be but heathen too.

CHAPTER V.

ON CHRISTIAN OBLIGATIONS.

When the right principle is established in the heart, the love of God will be the ruling motive of our actions; and then, the question will arise how we can serve him and in what way we can serve him best.

The most ready way and the easiest which suggests itself, is to give of our money when it is asked of us to promote any religious or benevolent purpose; or I should say, to give something from the fund which God has entrusted to our care certainly to promote our own comfort, but also to be used for his glory. But we are apt, as has been observed by Wilberforce, to pay our pepper corn and then settle down in the enjoyment of our estates, as if they were wholly our own.

If this is the only way in which we attempt to serve God, it is, to say the least, doubtful if we serve him at all. There are so many motives which may influence a man to give, that his giving, unless supported by other proofs, can do nothing towards establishing his Chris-

tian character. One has a facility in parting with his money, and does it readily whenever he is asked, though he care little for the object; nevertheless, he is ready to pocket the advantage of doing a good work. Another, has an eager desire for praise; he gives, because he likes to be thought liberal, and having secured this reward, he has no objection to the accompanying satisfaction derived from thinking that he has done it to serve God; and there is perhaps some expectation, that the good deed will hereafter be remembered for his benefit.—Others again contribute because it is expected of them.

It is quite questionable if the cause of religion is ever promoted by such gifts, although, those who have in view any particular enterprise, are generally eager to obtain them. God can work by small means as well as by great; and if he deigns to use our instrumentality at any time, it is to promote our own good and not for any advantage our efforts can produce to his cause. He can make effectual the mite of the poor widow, devoted to his service in the right spirit, and cause it to bring about wonders; while refusing the rich offerings of the proud ruler or the ostentatious pharisee, he can nullify their gifts and make

them wholly vain. May not this be the reason why we sometimes see a single tract, which cost but a few cents, blessed to the good of many souls, and at another time, find thousands of dollars expended without producing any result. The cent of the poor negro boy, given in sincere love, though cast into the treasury amidst heaps of silver, will not be lost sight of by God; and he may single it out as the messenger of salvation to some dying soul, while the mass of wealth with which it was mixed, being offered in another spirit, will be all spent for nought.

Of how much more importance then is the state of the heart, than the amount of the offering! Let every one then look to that, who would make to God an acceptable sacrifice, and would wish to see it become productive of good to his fellow-creatures. And what would be the consequence? would any say, if God can make little to be as effectual as much, I may as well give little! Can any think so? If love was made the dominant principle, would not the offerings be increased; would not each desire to contribute according to his means, the rich giving after the measure of his abundance, and the poor man still wishing to show his love, giving of his penury. It would no

longer be as it too often is now, while the poor man is sacrificing his comforts to put into the treasury of the Lord, the wealthy Christian is satisfied with tithing his superfluity. The last gets abundantly praised for his liberality, while the sacrifice of the other is not noticed.

This is our view of it; but in the sight of God, which has made the greatest offering? and who makes the most just estimate of actions? The answer to this question will show us how imperfect a standard of liberality can be found in the matter of dollars and cents. And yet, though this method can give us no idea of the thing when taken abstractedly, when taken in connection with other circumstances, it is not a bad criterion to assist in forming an estimate of the donor's feeling towards his Saviour. Though the cause of religion is not prospered according to the abundance poured into its treasures, yet, should we contribute as God has prospered us, were it not only to keep its spirit alive in our hearts. Those who have but little, if they love God, will desire to give of that little, that they may show forth *his* praise to whom they owe every enjoyment: those who have received much at his hands, if the same love glows as it should in their hearts, while they thankfully enjoy the

comforts he has provided for them, will wish to devote the superfluity which they possess in extending the glory of his name through the earth.

But put what we may into the treasuries of the Lord, we should still remember that on him alone depends the increase. His servants are much too apt to feel great confidence of success when they have obtained large sums of money to forward any enterprise, and to be in an equal degree discouraged, when they have been enabled to collect but slender means for carrying it on; they forget that the mighty power of the Lord needs not the assistance of his feeble creatures, though for our sakes he is graciously pleased to accept it. They forget that the arm of the Almighty is no stronger for any support we may render to him; that his wealth cannot be increased by our contributions; and that a steadfast faith will bring to us the power of that mighty arm, without which our labor is all in vain.

Yet, after all, since God has seen fit to make us instruments of doing his work, and allows us to improve the wealth he has given us as the means, why should we not rejoice to be enabled to contribute or to collect a large amount for that purpose? We certainly should be glad

therefor, viewing it as a mark of his blessing and trusting to *him* to make them effectual, and not to the riches themselves. Though he has given them to us and allows us through them to do him service, we should never forget that the silver and gold are still his; and that if he wishes to employ them, he can make the sea give up the wealth which a succession of ages have deposited in its deep recesses; that he knows the windings of every vein of ore, and, if he chooses, can bring its hidden treasures to light, and can place them where they will be used to his glory.

And he has so placed them when he has given them in the hands of a Christian; and they are so used, unless the trustee is unfaithful to his charge. When a man improves what has been confided to him with a sincere desire of glorifying God in its use, he may hope to be made the honored instrument of doing him service. Then in the morning let us sow and in the evening withhold not our hand, for we know not which shall prosper; if we scatter the seed in humble faith, God may graciously make both good alike.

But, after all, whether a man give of his wealth or of his penury, it is but an equivocal proof of his sincerity, unless supported by other

evidence. Without this, he cannot expect to do any thing effectually, for God will probably withhold his blessing. He may give and give, deny himself the necessaries of life, heap thousands upon thousands into the treasury of the Lord, and, after all, do him no service. The disciple of Jesus will not be satisfied in assisting with his worldly goods the cause of his divine Master, but he will feel that he has other talents entrusted to him which his duty calls him, and his love urges him to improve to promote the glory of his gracious Saviour. Without this proof of the renovation of his heart he cannot be satisfied in his hope of salvation; and when of this he feels a full assurance, the fresh glow of his gratitude will urge him on to increased and still increasing efforts.

The first and most substantial proof a man can give of the sincerity of his religion is the display of Christian character in his ordinary life and conversation. Without this, however loud his profession, however great his assumption of zeal and devotion, every one will set him down for a hypocrite. He is trying to deceive others, or is deceived by his own heart, and in either case his religion is but false.

Now this matter of a correct deportment is

not brought in out of its place, when speaking of the modes in which we do good to our fellow-creatures. There is no way in which the hearts of the disobedient may be more effectually drawn back to God than by seeing the blessed fruits of godliness in a pure and holy life. Our Saviour has commanded us to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. He would not have said so, if it was not likely to have such an influence; our own experience shows us that godliness of living makes the irreligious to respect religion, and often opens their hearts to receive it; our own reason would tell us, did we not know facts to prove it, that the brighter a light shines the farther will its rays extend, and that the more holy a Christian lives, the wider will be the circle of his power in disposing others to adopt the principles which are exhibited with so much beauty in his example.

It is doubtful if there is any other means by which Christians can bring about so great an amount of good in turning their impenitent fellow men to seek the blessed hopes of the Gospel, as they can, by a general revision of their own manners and habits. How many happy souls are there probably at this moment

rejoicing in heaven, who were led to turn their steps thither by observing the upright walk of some humble Christian! and we know not how many may be induced to follow even ourselves, if we will but steadily walk in the way set before us in the Gospel. And is it not worth the trial?

There is no one so humble, but, by an upright life and a steadfast faith, he may be the means—the blessed means—of turning many to righteousness; of saving, perhaps, thousands of souls from the horrible pit. May we not suppose of the poor Shepherd of Salisbury Plains, whose story, so graphically told, has been spread to every quarter of the globe, and in each has been probably blessed to the salvation of many souls, that he will meet, with joyful surprise, the ransomed from the East and from the West, from the North and from the South, who were won to the Saviour by seeing his love so beautifully exhibited in the life of his humble disciple! Will they not be to the lowly-minded Shepherd, a source of gladness and a crown of rejoicing in the kingdom of his Father; while many a lordly professor, and many a worldly-minded priest, shall see crowds condemned to the blackness of darkness forever

who are driven from seeking the way of life, by beholding their inconsistent walk! Will not the one shine among the brightest stars of the hosts of heaven; while the others, if they be saved at all, will be as it were by fire; and as they see the damned souls whom they failed to turn to the Saviour, going off to the regions of eternal despair, will they not think it strange that themselves are not also driven away to the same hopeless doom?

Who, then, that has known a Saviour's love would not wish to make such a beautiful exhibition of a Christian life? To say nothing of the benefit to our own souls, who is among us that feels any compassion for his fellow-creatures, who, that has any sense of gratitude towards God for his merciful kindness shown to us, but must desire so to live, that others, seeing his upright conversation and steady, fruitful faith, may themselves be led to glorify our Father in heaven; that, all around him observing his peace of mind and his holy joy, and knowing them to be derived from a sense of reconciliation to God and a hope of eternal happiness through Jesus Christ, may be led to desire the same blessed enjoyments, and for themselves to seek the same precious Saviour!

But though a holy life is so important, that without it, we may not hope to effect much good in the world; yet it is not sufficient that we keep free from reproach, that we do not stumble in our walk, falling into open sin to the disgrace of our profession. The miseries of a lost world cry to us to make a decided effort for its rescue; the love of God, if it reigns in our hearts, will constrain us to activity in his service.

Without a life of piety we may labor all our days in vain; but, after all, it is but an auxiliary. An indispensable auxiliary it certainly is, but still not the principal. Without it, the most active zeal will bring nothing of real good, and itself inactive, it will effect but little; but assiduous labor, backed and supported by this, will accomplish wonders.

And a holy life, based as it must be, on love and gratitude to God, *will be* a life of activity. The heart ennobled by these feelings, impressed with a sense of the greatness of its divine Creator, filled with wonder at the goodness of a long-suffering, crucified Redeemer, *cannot* be satisfied in a life of sloth and indolence; but it will be ever thinking how it may show forth the praise of such a merciful God, such a gracious Saviour. The heart abased under a

sense of its own unworthiness, thankful that its sins have been forgiven and subdued by the unmerited mercy, will yearn over the lost condition of an impenitent world, will pity the poor souls it sees going on to destruction. It cannot sink into apathy wrapped up in the comfortable assurance of having its own salvation made certain; but it will be ever busy in devising and active in executing measures by which the careless may be awakened, and some, among the ruined millions around, be made to rejoice in the same joyful hope of eternal life.

Does it then follow that every pious person will preach the Gospel? Yes, he will preach it as he has opportunity; and he will seek opportunities. Every one may not become a public preacher; but every one does preach who faithfully teaches a child or any dependent, who warns a friend or a careless neighbor and seeks to persuade them to turn to the Lamb of God, who alone can take away their sins. And he is using the strongest persuasions who exhibits a pure and undefiled religion in the way pointed out by St. James; by visiting the fatherless and the widow in their afflictions, and in keeping himself unspotted from the world.

It is true that the claims of our fellow-creatures and our obligations to the God of mercy, loudly call upon us to teach the way of life to the dying sinners around us; but it does not follow that we must all become ministers of the sanctuary. Does not every faithful instructer in the Sabbath school strive to lead the children of his charge into this way, and are they not often eminently successful? It is doubtful whether a person with zeal and humble faith, may not be the direct means in the course of a life thus spent, of winning as many souls to the Saviour as if he had entered upon the public ministry of the word. Of all who, in any congregation, are gathered into the flock of Christ, how large a proportion have had the good seed sown in the Sabbath school, where it has sprouted, grown up, and perhaps brought forth fruit under the fostering care of a faithful teacher.

But does the minister deserve the less praise because the teacher comes in for his share? Far from it. If they have been faithful together, together shall they reap the rich reward. The one acts as leader, the other as a subaltern in the same cause. The general gets the chief praise for a victory; but it is not the less effected by the inferior officers who

have disciplined and guided the forces; the credit is not the less his claim if he has done his duty, for the officers in their turn must be drilled by him and taught to perform their part.

And those who have the trust of daily instructing youth, have they not the charge to preach the Gospel? Those who have continual opportunities of gathering the tender lambs into the flock of Christ, are they not responsible for the proper improvement of them? And it will be acknowledged, that, in their office, there is abundant opportunity for the exercise of the Christian virtues,—of patience and long-suffering,—of justice tempered with mercy,—of kind forbearance and determined resolution. They who thus exercise their office will command the respect, while they are still winning upon the love of their charge; and in both ways will they be gaining influence over their minds and hearts, so that they can easily mould them to almost any form they wish.

As our Saviour is afflicted in the afflictions of his flock, so will they be towards the little lambs committed to their charge; and as in one case, so in the other will the sympathy find ready access to the bosom of the sufferer.

He chastises us unwillingly and for our good, yet does not withhold correction when it is required, though it is like inflicting punishment upon himself; and this to us, if our sentiments towards him are what they should be, will be the harshest portion of every bitter cup which our sins shall cause us to taste. And so the faithful instructer, whose heart has been moulded to love under the softening influences of the Gospel, cannot but feel pain in giving pain; and while a sense of duty will prevent him from withholding the required chastisement, it will produce a double effect upon the little ones from seeing the suffering it causes to him they have learned to love. Our gracious Lord has not only encouraged us to come and confess our sins to him, but also to lay before him all our cares and our sorrows, to seek comfort from his ready sympathy, as well as relief by his help. And so will the affectionate teacher incite his tender charge to acknowledge to him their faults and to deposit in his faithful bosom all their little troubles, with the assurance of his disposition to afford them his assistance; and where that is not in his power, to lighten their childish sorrows by bearing his portion of them.

Were the instructers in our daily schools

and other establishments of learning, such as they should be in every Christian land, the Ministers of the Gospel would have but little to do in winning souls to Christ; and their labors would consist in watching, lest those whom others had drawn in, should wander from the fold of the great Shepherd.

To take another class in the community; who is there that has a better, or even so good, an opportunity to speak a word in season, as has the Christian physician? From the first preaching of the Gospel, was the word accompanied by the gift of healing the bodily infirmities of men. Our Saviour exercised it himself, and gave the same power to his immediate disciples, who used it freely. Doubtless it was intended so far as it was miraculous, as an evidence of the Christian Religion on its first announcement to the world; but it was also effectual in opening the hearts of those who had received relief to the instruction of those who brought it.

Now, as then, the afflicted are naturally laid open to be influenced by those from whom they expect relief. This sympathy between the physician and the patient levels many a hill, and makes smooth many a rough place, which

would obstruct the word in its passage to the sinner's heart. Why then may not the former exercise the power thus given him to persuade sinners to turn to God? While he is striving to heal his bodily infirmities, why should he not endeavor to turn the patient towards the great Physician, who alone can heal the soul: why should he not try to mould the heart, softened by affliction, to the love of God, and to persuade the hitherto hardened sinner to bend his stubborn knees at the foot of the cross?

Surely this is not a talent given, for the use of which, no account will be required. It is true, God does not give the ministers of his word the power to heal miraculously as he did at first; but neither does he now give the miraculous gift of language. The religion once established on sufficient evidence, neither was required to be continued. Nevertheless, languages acquired by patient study are considered essential means of spreading the Gospel in the world: and so likewise, should the art of healing, obtained in the same way, be used as an auxiliary to the word, both at home and abroad.

A most powerful auxiliary it does still prove, as we may easily perceive. Look through the

accounts of foreign missions; and whether in China, among the Hindoos, at the Cape of Good Hope, or, in whatever place we can make the investigation, do we not find those most ready to listen to the Gospel who have in themselves, or through their friends, received bodily relief from the medical skill of the Christian teachers? And let us thank God that in our own land, the instances are not rare of careless sinners being awakened and turned to God through the instrumentality of a Christian physician. How important then is it to our country, and to the world, that every physician should be a Christian; and of how much moment, that such should remember and duly consider the great responsibility accruing from this valuable talent with which they are entrusted!

We might go on and take a view of every profession and of every means of obtaining a livelihood, not dishonorable in itself; and we should find that each presents its own opportunities of acting upon the hearts of our fellow men, besides, that each station in life is accompanied with those social relations in which all can exert the most powerful influence. And in both ways have we received in charge

valuable talents, for which an account must hereafter be rendered.

The property then with which we are entrusted, the influence we enjoy in our families or by our professions, in the circle of our acquaintance, or in the community in which we dwell, or which we may exercise upon our country or bring to bear upon the world,—all these, with every opportunity they open to us of glorifying God and of doing good to our fellow-creatures, bring upon us a responsibleness from which we can in no wise get clear, but by the faithful discharge of every duty accruing from them. All these duties, when performed with the desire to glorify God, cause us to exercise a direct influence upon the temporal and eternal welfare of some of our fellow creatures, and indirectly, upon the happiness of the whole human race.

If they are not then rightly discharged, have we not to fear this awful responsibleness? When the souls of those who we might have helped to save, but did not, shall be driven off towards the horrible pit, will it not be to us a dreadful sight? will not an angry conscience plant a sting of remorse in our souls accusing us of their blood? And will not they accuse

us of their ruin; and will not their cry of despair be to us a cry of terror, bringing anguish to our own hearts; and shall we not fearfully draw back from the anticipation of passing an eternity with their shrill shriek ringing in our ears!

If we could escape the pains of hell and secure the joys of heaven by any efforts of our own, what vigorous, untiring efforts should we make! And, if we are saved by unremitted grace, will any say we are less loudly called upon to act? Shall gratitude be a less powerful motive of action to the Christian's heart, than a selfish interest would be? Far, far from us should be every such thought.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTIAN OBLIGATIONS IN THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION.

In the last chapter I endeavored to point out some of the ways by which a Christian might do good to his fellow-creatures, and bring his powers to bear in the great work of converting the world. And I observed, that there

was no calling which was respectable in itself, which did not open the way to some opportunities for their exercise. But it does not by any means follow, that all alike present facilities for doing what, as Christians, we must all desire to do.

When any disciple of Jesus is found engaged in any vocation not objectionable in itself, he is not required to change his calling; but to glorify God in its exercise. If he wants not the disposition, he can never lack opportunity to show forth the praise of his Redeemer, both by a godly life and by active efforts for the extension of his kingdom.

But when an individual is marking out for himself a course of life upon which he is about to enter, if the love of God rules in his heart, that love will urge him to select the calling by which he can serve God best. If this has had its proper influence, he will be filled with compassion for the wretched condition of his fellow mortals, and of course his bowels will yearn to render them all the assistance in his power. If, as doubtless he will, he considers their eternal interests of far more importance than their temporal concerns, he will turn his

attention chiefly to the first, though he will not be neglectful of their welfare in the other.

If he feels, as he must, that his Saviour has conferred upon him unspeakable benefits, he will desire to make some suitable return. The infinite extent of his obligation will not discourage him in this; for, if he cannot repay it all, his grateful heart will prompt him to do what he can to exhibit his love. Knowing the great value stamped upon the souls of men by their Creator, he will be eager to assist in preserving them from destruction. He will rejoice to be made the instrument of saving even one soul. But he will not be satisfied to save one; for the second is of as much value as the first, and each succeeding one of like estimation; and he will still rejoice in adding another and another to the happy company of the redeemed, again and again to delight his Saviour by bringing to him a fresh ransomed soul, to awaken anew the hosts of heaven to their repeated songs of praise, to place another and still another bright jewel in his own crown of heavenly joy.

Then will arise the question, "In what calling can these objects be best attained and most easily accomplished?" If the purpose be to act upon the hearts of men, that profession

would seem to be most suitable, the peculiar business of which is, to search the heart and to study the influences which may be brought to bear upon it. These marks point directly to the office of the Gospel ministry.

Is it then obligatory upon every Christian who has a profession to choose, to make the choice of this? It is not so; it may not even be expedient, Many can do God better service in other ways: there may be physical objections, and there may be mental impediments, which may totally disqualify an individual for usefulness in this line of duty.—Moreover, some may not be able to procure a suitable education, and others may have dependent relatives who look to them for immediate support; and there may be a thousand obstacles which might render it exceedingly difficult, or impossible, or improper, for a particular person to enter upon such a course of life; and I think no one would say it was the duty of one so situated, to strive against them.

But, suppose no such impediments in the way; but that a man is free to choose as inclination or a sense of duty shall dictate, what is then required of him? Just to be guided by his own conscience. If his mind is enlight-

ened and his heart sanctified, the conscience will be faithful; and he will faithfully obey it. And yet, different individuals under apparently similar circumstances, will not generally arrive at the same results; for each must be the judge of his own case, and there are so many particulars which come in to influence the views taken by every one upon any subject under consideration, that any two may be led to decide very far apart; and yet, there may be no ground to suppose that either has been actuated by improper motives.

Therefore, it does not necessarily follow, that a Christian in making choice of a profession will decide upon the Gospel ministry; but yet, I think, that every one who is truly sincere, will not neglect to give it a proper consideration. The chief object of all who are themselves in the way to salvation, should be to bring others into the same path. To effect this all-important purpose, has the ministry of the Gospel been established; therefore, all who have this subject upon their hearts, will give to this means a portion of their attention. No one, I think, can neglect to consider it, and still less can any conscientious man enter upon the duties of this office, without carefully weighing the fearful, the awful responsibleness with

which it is involved. This has doubtless been an obstacle which has deterred many from taking upon them these duties.

But is this a valid objection? It is felt to be so by many in other things. Some will not take charge of a class in a Sabbath school, because, unless they are faithful, they think they must render an account for the souls of the children. And it is true that their blood will be required at the hands of the teacher, if the little ones finally go down to perdition through his neglect. But he is no more accountable for the souls of those entrusted to him, than is the instructer of a daily school for those under his care. In like manner is the physician amenable, if he neglects the spiritual welfare of his patients; and every other calling is subject to a like accountableness with regard to the souls of those with whom it brings us in contact. But who thinks of making this objection to any other profession? The truth is, we generally find some one or other of these modes of life very convenient in supplying us with the necessaries, the comforts or the luxuries which we desire; and we are very apt to consider of it only as it regards these things. It would not be improper for the person who is

making his choice, seriously to ask himself whether, if the ministry of the Gospel was attended with the same emoluments as another profession, his conscience would be so scrupulous in avoiding the responsibleness of the office.

Furthermore, it would be well for us to reflect a little before we conclude that the minister of the Gospel does indeed occupy, as regards his office, the situation which, more than all others, incurs the greatest measure of accountableness with respect to any portion of our fellow-immortals. There is, most certainly, no profession which brings with it so dreadful a burden of guilt, if, in its exercise, the souls of any are neglected. But our mode of gaining a livelihood is not the only way in which we establish relations with our fellow-creatures. Who does not see that those who enter in the marriage state and involve themselves in the duties of parents, take upon themselves a far more awful responsibleness than even the minister of God himself? They not only are required to take diligent charge in bringing their children into the way of life, but, if they neglect it, they have incurred an additional, far greater load of guilt, by bringing them into the way of sin and death. They

have brought into existence immortal souls to wither forever in the torments of despair; though, but for their neglect, they might have secured a happy inheritance among the joyful hosts of heaven.

Who cannot perceive that those to whom we have given life, have a greater claim to our attention than it is possible for any other of our fellow-creatures to possess? and it is upon these claims that our amenability at the bar of God is chiefly founded. So great was the responsibleness conferred by these relations felt to be by a man, who, with great ability and much to the advantage of the church and the community, occupied a very important station, that when a friend, in whom he could confide, offered to take charge of his children that the care of them might not interfere with the duties of his office, he said; he considered that his children involved him in the most important trust, and, if he could not give sufficient attention to both, he felt it would be his duty to resign his office and look diligently after his own offspring.

But though the vast importance of this trust must be acknowledged, who has ever heard of its preventing man or woman from entering the married state? The very idea will, perhaps,

make the reader smile. But let us think seriously; is there any reason why it should not, as well the trust involved in the holy office, should prevent a man from entering the ministry, or taking upon himself the duties of a Sabbath school teacher? Can there be any other cause assigned, why we should be so much more ready to take upon us the obligations arising from the one relation, than we are those of the other, except, that in the one case we are making provision for our own pleasure, while in the other, we are only serving our Maker, which we thereby show to be a less consideration. I would ask those who fear to take upon themselves the office of seeking the salvation of their fellow men, whether the same tender conscience will prevent their entering into the bands of matrimony!

Again, when a man hires a servant, does he not bring a human being where he is under obligation to look after his eternal welfare? But who has ever heard of any one being unwilling to have one on that account? I did, indeed, once hear a man say that he would never take a minor in that capacity, because his engagements would not allow of his giving the proper religious instruction, and he should

fear to have the blood of that soul required at his hands. I need hardly say, that, of all men whom I have known, he would have been one of the last to have incurred the guilt of neglecting any such sacred trust.

But it is well worth our while further to consider whether, by neglecting to take upon us duties in the Sabbath school, in the ministry, or in any other responsible station for which we possess the necessary qualifications, we can thereby shift from us the obligations we should have incurred by taking that office upon us.

We are supposing that God has given us talents both of mind and circumstance, which we may improve to his glory by using them to the advantage of those around us. Jesus Christ has told us, that an account will be required for all these things. Are we ready to go to God and say, "Here is thy talent which I have kept wrapt up in a napkin; for I knew thee that thou wast a hard master;" that, if I had put what I was entrusted with into active service, that thou wouldst have required an abundant increase; and it did not comport with my dignity or with my indolence,

nor did it suit my love of pleasure, or my attachment to gain, to secure this. Will any of us answer God thus?

Ah! they will be far different words which will fill our mouths as we stand before the throne of our righteous Judge at the last day! What a fearful sight will then be opened to our view! Even if we could look at it as unconcerned spectators, how would our hearts tremble at the tremendous realities presented to our sight! The Almighty is seated upon his awful tribunal, and the nations of the earth stand quaking before him. How will the hearts of the mighty then faint within them! How simple will the wise of this world then appear! How contemptible the proud! They have all lost their lofty bearing. They have come to be judged, and how gladly would they abase themselves below the meanest of their fellows to gain the boon of annihilation! But even this wish is denied them.

And we must all stand at that bar; and we cannot be there as unconcerned spectators. We shall have a fearful interest in each sentence which is passed. Our souls will be there naked, stript of every covering we now use to hide the sins with which they have been defiled; and what a loathsome sight will they

present, unless they shall have been washed in the pure fountain, opened for their cleansing by redeeming love! Those who have been thus purified, we are told, shall stand on the right hand of the Judge, clothed in white; and on the left, shall be gathered the polluted souls of the unwashed millions in all the abominable defilement of their sins. In whichever company we shall be placed, shall we be willing to come forward and render in our unused talent? And for its neglect shall we be ready to say to our righteous Judge, that we kept it buried because we feared its use would have required us to serve him better than we wished? Might we not expect to hear our sentence in the words of our Saviour—"Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee, thou slothful servant?"

Then, indeed, shall we find the riches we have enjoyed to be a burden to our souls, if we have not glorified the Giver in their use. Then shall we wish that God had denied us an intellect, if we have not used it in his service: every means of influencing our fellow-creatures, whether derived from personal qualifications, from situations, or circumstances, if we have not improved it for their good, will become a thorn to fester in our souls. We shall wish

that we had been poor, and weak, and foolish, and despised, rather than to have possessed advantages for which we can render no good account. Perhaps we shall even regret that our lot was not cast in some heathen land, where we should have bowed down before the idols of our own workmanship, rather than to have had the Gospel in our unfaithful hands to increase our condemnation.

Does it not clearly appear from the parable of our Saviour to which I have referred, that we are answerable for the good we might have done by the use of any gift, as well as for the injury we do by the abuse of it? Every power we possess, is given us as an endowment in trust for the good, not only of ourselves, but of every other for whose benefit it can be used. And if we do not so improve it, we are as faithless to our trust, as would be a guardian who was to leave the property of his ward uninvested: and as he must render an account to the laws of his country, so must we give a much more fearful account to our God. What folly then is it to think that we can escape the guilt of neglect, by keeping out of the way of doing what we have it in our power to do!

Wherefore it follows, not that the Christian should take upon himself every duty which pre-

sents itself, but that he should seriously consider how far his circumstances will allow of it, and how far his obligations to God and to his fellow men require it of him. And if he finds there is no impediment in his way, an enlightened conscience will not allow his love of ease, of pleasure, or of gain, to keep him from it. He cannot so silence conscience by any false reasoning, as to do away his accountableness to God, or to remove from his soul the guilt of unfaithfulness, while he neglects his duty to the souls of men.

And in selecting a field of labor, will not the same reasoning be made to have its influence. If many souls are of more value than a few, the souls of a nation must be of greater moment than those of a small community.—Not greater in kind of course, but greater in the aggregate, as every additional one is placed in the account. A man must consider the amount of good that may probably be done, not only in his own generation, but in all following; and does it not appear in this view, that the Foreign Missionary has a far more extensive field of usefulness than the parish minister?

And if he is faithful in his office, may he not

hope to present to his Saviour, at the last day, a more abundant offering of ransomed souls, brought, by his instrumentality, into the way of life!

And is it not then worthy the consideration of the faithful minister of Christ, whether his duty calls upon him to take up his cross and go to the distant heathen; or whether it sanctions his remaining at his ease in a comparatively self indulgent station in his own land? In the abstract, we see the importance of a more extensive field of labor duly appreciated; though all who estimate its importance, do not take so large a view as to embrace the wide field of some far off pagan country. Many an individual fails to realize the great opportunities of usefulness there presented, who can readily see them when offered a city congregation of refined and learned in exchange for a parish of uneducated rustics. Nor can we perceive that the prospect of a few thousands, instead perhaps of as many hundreds, as the compensation for his services, has very often an influence in checking his expectation of doing good, though it not unfrequently has that effect.

I would be far from intimating that I sup-

posed the prevailing motive in these cases, is otherwise than a pure one; I hope and believe, that in general it is. Neither is it improper for a minister, nor for any other Christian, to place a value upon the society of those whose intellectual endowments prepare them to be agreeable associates to an educated mind. Nor is it wrong when a man finds his family cramped in their means of support, that he should desire a more comfortable maintenance for them. It not only is not wrong, but it is right and proper that every one should duly consider these things, provided he only allows to them their right and proper influence. But there is another thing which he should also consider the danger to his own spirituality of mind arising from his removal to a station where, in general, he will be surrounded by worldliness and formality. Many a faithful pastor to an humble rustic flock, who was fast winning his charge to the fold of the Great Shepherd, has had his usefulness destroyed, if his own soul has not been endangered, by his removal to the polluting atmosphere of a city.

These remarks are not made to find fault with the general motives of individuals in changing their field of labor. These changes seem to be necessary and useful, inasmuch, as

it is better that a man should be exposed to evil influences after he has acquired some knowledge of the world and gained stability, whereby he may the more easily resist temptation, than that he should be subjected to them during the inexperience of youth: and as to the evils themselves, there seems to be no remedy for them that admits of general application.

But the reason generally given for accepting a large parish in preference to a smaller one, or, for removing from the last to the first, is that the one affords more abundant opportunities of doing good than does the other; that is, it presents more frequent occasions to glorify God by winning the souls of men to him.—With this last reason I am not disposed to find fault, though I much doubt if it is well founded; nor, am I disposed to question that the reason given is the true motive of action; but merely to suggest the inquiry, whether it would not be worth the attention of those who give it, to consider; if, indeed, these are the ends which they desire to accomplish, will they not be attained much more effectually by entering upon the still wider field of missionary labor? This last, further recommends itself to the sin-

cere and humble Christian, by the fact, that here he will be freed from most of those temptations, which in the other, will be leagued against his spirituality of mind, if they do not jeopardize his soul.

And if this is recommended to the clergy, what must laymen do? They ought to take the same considerations into view, and be governed by the same principles of action. Their Master is one, and their obligations to serve him the same. Though they may not be enrolled among the regular forces of their Prince, they are not the less bound to fight manfully in his cause: if they are not drawn up in the line of battle, they can skirmish on the flanks, and in the rear, and sometimes even in the van; and they may be as instrumental in gaining the victory as if their station had been among the tried soldiers in the front rank. And they can always stand by to relieve the oppressed warrior of his arms, when for a while, he would retire to recruit his strength.

But in choosing a self-denying field of labor, there are two sides to be considered. On one, we find marked the good that may be done to our fellow-creatures, and to balance the work we must do, and the sacrifices we must make

ourselves. Unless we find the considerations first mentioned preponderate in our hearts, I do not say we ought to undertake very self-denying labors. God loves a willing gift. A cheerful sacrifice alone can we believe that he will accept and bless.

There seem to be three motives, which, together, or separately, influence all who attempt to lead a religious life, and to do what they think will be pleasing to God. One is the fear of God's wrath. "The fear of the Lord that is wisdom;" and yet, if it lead to no higher principle of action, it is a slavish fear and cannot be pleasing to our heavenly Father, who requires less selfish motives in us, if we would do him acceptable service.

The second incentive which leads men to apparently benevolent effort, is a sense of duty. We have duties to perform for God and towards our fellow-creatures; and it is very important we should feel an abiding sense of our obligations to fulfil them. But a mere cold sense of duty is not, after all, the thing which God desires to see governing our conduct. It is doubtful if any service performed from such motive alone, can be pleasing to God. It

savors of self righteousness, and a sacrifice made in such a spirit cannot be acceptable to the Almighty.

What earthly parent would be pleased to have his children obey him only from fear of his anger, or even from a cold sense of duty? Would he not be grieved at the state of their hearts, and their feelings towards him, though they might do all that he desired them to do? Would he not wish them to love him; and so long as they were not prompted by love, he would care but little whether they served him or not. And shall we put off our heavenly Father with a less acceptable offering? As an old New England divine expresses it, Shall we give to his creatures the wheat, and put God off with the chaff?

We can readily love our parents for their personal qualities, and can be thankful for their many acts of kindness to us: and shall we not love the all-perfect being who has made us, and shall we not be thankful to the merciful God, who has bestowed upon us all our blessings, and our kind parents among the rest? And shall not love to the great, and good, and merciful Jehovah, be made the prevailing principles of our lives; and shall they not lead us zeal-

ously, devotedly, and faithfully, to serve him? Unless, then, we make these our motives we had better not pretend to do him service, for without these we can do nothing that will be pleasing in his sight; of course, we cannot expect his blessing; we cannot expect to do any good to our fellow creatures.

Let every one then who would serve his Maker, see that his principles of action are right: and he need not fear to suppress every deed that would flow from any other; and then, every offering which is laid upon the altar of the Almighty, will be graciously received at his hands. Purify the fountain and the waters will flow forth bright and sparkling: remove the mud and filth from their source, and they will rush on in a full and abundant stream.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE USE OF PRAYER AS A MEANS OF DOING GOOD.

"EXCEPT the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows." Unless the Lord grant his blessing, it is indeed vain for us to labor: all our care, all our watchfulness, all our endeavors, are but in vain.—Whether it be temporal or spiritual good we are seeking, whether for ourselves or for others, it cannot be obtained without the blessing of the Almighty: with this, our feeblest efforts must be successful; without, we may weary ourselves for nought and wear ourselves away in an useless struggle.

How important then, how all-important is it, that we should secure this blessing; for we cannot even do good to our fellow-creatures without it. Without this, we give away our wealth, and it is lost: we may labor night and day for the salvation of men without effecting any good for their souls. If, then, it depends

upon another and not upon ourselves, why should we weary ourselves with efforts, which after all, may be useless? Is it not discouraging to think that after all we can do, we can effect nothing of ourselves?

No! for by the help of our God, we can do all things. We know how we can obtain his assistance: we know that he will hear the cry of his servants; he will listen to their prayers; we know, that he will faithfully answer those who faithfully call upon him; that he is ever present, and ever ready to help those who in sincerity ask it of him.

Wherefore it happens, that prayer, of all the means to be used for the conversion of the world, is the one which always has, and always will, prove the most efficacious. The poor woman, who, as she leans over her wash-tub, breathes, or thinks an heartfelt prayer for the blinded heathen, accomplishes more for the world, than can the loftiest intellect, with all the wealth and all the power on earth to assist it, without this necessary auxiliary; for without this, God's blessing will not follow. Intellect, and wealth, and influence are not to be undervalued as the means of doing good; but without God's help, they are altogether vain. He will be inquired of by the children of men:

if they will not seek direction from him, he can render all their knowledge foolishness, and can bring to nought all the power of the mighty: without Him, human strength is very weakness, human wisdom is worse than folly, and wealth is but a canker to the soul.

Now tell a worldly-minded man that you are engaged in a very important labor, and that you feel that your power is not equal to it, and moreover, that you have too little time to accomplish your work if you had the power; and, therefore, that you will leave off, to retire to your closet and pray; he would say, you was a simpleton to be frittering away time which had better be spent in vigorous efforts to complete your task. It is because he does not realize what, perhaps, he will acknowledge in the abstract, that there is an all-seeing, almighty God ever present and ever ready to hear the prayers of his creatures, and that he can enable the feeblest of them to accomplish the greatest works. If he could believe as he ought, that this great and good God can effect more by a single word than the most highly endowed of mankind by the labors of their lives, this matter of praying would not appear such a simple and such an useless operation.

We see the same man can judge correctly enough in any similar case, which comes within the comprehension of his unenlightened mind.

It is but a short time since there were a crew of pirates confined in the Boston gaol, under condemnation of death. The wife of one of these men had come across the Atlantic, in hopes she could find some way to save his life; and what course did her own judgment point out to her as the most likely to succeed; and what course did her friends recommend her to pursue? According to the analogy in the former case, they would have thought it best for her to go to work diligently and try to scratch through the granite walls; or, to rub away the iron bars that she might clear a way for her husband to escape. And inasmuch as her time would not be sufficient to effect so great a labor, there would be the more reason that she should diligently use what she had. She did not undertake so hopeless a task; but what did she do? She knew, and her friends knew, that there was a man at Washington, who, by a single flourish of his pen, could effect more than she could by years of labor. She hastened to humble herself be-

fore him and to beg for her husband's life, which the President granted to her earnest prayer. Having obtained his favor, the watchful guardians of the prison made way at his command; the strong bolts which of herself she would have been unable to move, flew back; the massy doors were opened, and she received her husband to her arms, as it were, from the very brink of his yawning grave.

And shall the children of light be less wise in this thing than the children of the world? Shall we have less hope in the power, and feel less confidence in the goodness, of our God, than others do in a fellow-mortal, whom circumstances have placed in a station of earthly exaltation?

And is not this case I have chosen analogous to our own? Have we not friends and kindred, and are not the communities in which we dwell, and the nation of which we form a part, and, with little exception, are not the whole human race held bound by Satan? Our feeble strength cannot remove their fetters or open their prison gates; but we can cry to the mighty to help us, and if he say the word, they must be set free.

But if the President had required the petitioner to do something as the terms on which

the pardon should be granted, would she not have done it? She doubtless would have done any thing in her power. He *did* require that she should ask it; she asked and received.

It is sometimes said by objectors that as God knows all that we want before we ask, it can be of no use to pray to him. And did not General Jackson know that this woman desired the pardon of her husband before she petitioned, and yet he did not grant it till afterward; and if she had not asked, he probably would not have granted it at all. If any one had said to her, "He knows what you desire, and therefore it is unnecessary to say more about it," would not her own sense have refused to admit the soundness of the reasoning, and would she not have eagerly refuted it? There is a comon saying, "That what is worth having, is worth asking for." Vulgar as the proverb may be, it contains much good sense, such as we always act upon in the concerns of time. Is there any reason why it should be discarded in the more important things which pertain to eternity?

When the Earl of Essex was under condemnation and awaiting his execution, Queen

Elizabeth was willing and anxious to grant her favorite a pardon; but she very properly expected that he would apply for it. She did not hear from him, and she gave the order for his death. In the days of his prosperity, she had given a ring as the pledge of her affection, promising it should plead for him if, in any change of fortune, he sent it to her. The hour of his need had come, and he sent her the ring; but the malicious messenger proved false, and did not deliver her trust; and the Queen, after waiting in vain to hear from her favorite, signed the warrant for his execution, and the poor Earl perished upon the scaffold.

I mention this anecdote, which is familiar to every school-boy, because it appears to me well suited to exhibit our relations to our Almighty Sovereign; not indeed by comparison, but by contrast.

Our King not only knows our wants, but he always knows when we desire, and hears us when we ask, to have them relieved. No faithless go-between can nullify our petitions. Our gracious Sovereign will not only remember his promise, but he can always hear when we plead it; and we know that he will faithfully answer. He can never forget the pledge he has given us, for our gracious Saviour is ever

present to make intercession for us. But if we will not express to him our wants, if we will not plead his promise, if we will not produce our pledge and rest our hopes of success upon it, can we be surprised if we do not obtain our desires?

Moreover, when a person has obtained a pardon for a very dear friend, how does he act? Does he place it in his pocket and go carelessly about his ordinary business; or does he not rather hasten with it to the prison lest some accident prevent him, lest he should arrive too late, when the execution has taken place, and thus the offered grace be rendered vain. Would he not hasten his steps were it only, that his friend might the sooner hear the joyful news and be made earlier glad in the expectation of deliverance? And we cannot suppose he would hurry on the less rapidly if, on his faithfulness in this respect, were based the terms of the pardon.

Now are not we entrusted with such an important document, no less than the promise of pardon to impenitent sinners which is granted to our prayers, but granted on these very terms, that we are faithful in delivering the message of mercy? How many poor wretches in the gall of bitterness, would have their lot

lightened by the prompt application of this remedy, would be made even joyful in the hope of that better inheritance which awaits all who accept the offered pardon? And do not our impenitent friends, our neighbors, our countrymen, and a dying world, loudly cry to us to deliver this message of mercy? Do we not hear them beseeching us to pity their never-dying souls? Do not their present miseries and the coming eternity of despair which is prepared for all who die impenitent, clamorously call upon us to spread abroad the good tidings which we have received in trust, not only for our own salvation, but for all to whom we can give, or to whom we can send them? Does not God who had mercy on us while we were yet sinners, require of us to have pity on other poor sinners?

If any man seeth his brother have need and tells him to be warmed and filled, and yet ministers not to his necessity, the apostle tells us he is a hypocrite. Would he have thought him less of a hypocrite if he had prayed God that his brother's wants might be supplied, and yet failed to relieve him from his own abundance? Now is not every one making a practical commentary upon this remark, who daily or weekly prays that all men may be saved, and yet refuses to give of his wealth, or of his

time, and neglects to exercise his talents or his influence to further the end for which he prays?

If, then, our fellow-creatures have such claims upon our attention, if their salvation is of so much importance and if prayer be such an effectual means of bringing about this end, how earnest and how untiring should we be in our prayers! We should plead for those who are near and those who are dear to us, and for all, however distant and unknown; for all are susceptible of pleasure and of pain, and all have never-dying souls to enjoy the one or to endure the other through eternity.

And if, in addition to our prayers, it is necessary that we should strive, how should we make ourselves the burden of our prayers not only that we may be saved ourselves, but also, that we may be earnestly desirous for the salvation of others; and that what we desire, we may steadily and zealously endeavor to effect. If we have wealth, we should pray that we may have grace to yield what is superfluous to supply the wants of our fellow-creatures; and in using it for this purpose, we should earnestly pray God to make it effectual; and then we may indeed expect

his blessing upon it,—his blessing upon its ministration to the good of others, and in returns to our own souls, to which, but too often, the ensnaring possession proves a curse.

And we should pray that, whether rich or poor, we may never satisfy ourselves with a money contribution to God's service; but that we may remember we are entrusted with time, a deposit in our hands of much more value than any riches which we can possibly possess. We should pray that we may faithfully improve this precious talent, and that we may not fail to use it for the great purpose for which it is given, in the opportunities we all enjoy of doing good. We should never fear to use it in doing God's work, even though we may sometimes encroach thereby upon hours allotted to what we consider important concerns. We should know that God can order our matters for us better than we can for ourselves; and we need never be afraid that he will allow us to suffer essentially for want of the time occupied in his service. Of course I shall not be understood to recommend any man's neglecting to provide for his own support, or that of his family, from Quixotic attempts to do good to others. Nature and revelation alike make our first charge those who are nearest to us;

and the habits and feelings even of Christians, must be very greatly changed, before there can be any danger of their going to such an extreme in doing service to their Maker.

We are further entrusted with very important talents in our intellectual capacities, and in the means we possess of improving them; and these we all enjoy in a greater or less degree. These, we can all employ in doing great good or great evil in the world; and there seems a necessity that we should employ them for one or the other. We should, then, most earnestly pray that the purposes to which we may put them may be for the first, and not for the last. We should be watchful, and pray that we may be watchful, lest not only in intention but by carelessness, we may commit evil; and we should be vigilant in seeking, and pray that we may be faithful in using, opportunities of doing good in the exercise of our mental powers. And we should ask the grace of God, that all the influence which our various advantages and endowments must cause us to exert, may be used for the good and not to the detriment of mankind.

And when we have done all that it is in our power to do, we must still most fervently pray

that our motives may be right, lest not only our efforts should be all vain, but even our prayers themselves should be an abomination; lest, they bring down a curse upon ourselves and upon all for whom we labor.

The heathen well understood the nature of prayer, who describes the wagoner as calling to his false god to help him out of the mire; while Jupiter answered, by telling him to place his shoulder to the wheel and try to help himself if he wanted his assistance. And God does require of us to help ourselves, and to try to effect, by the means he has placed in our hands, every purpose which we would wish brought to pass. And why does he require it? Can the Almighty Jehovah need the aid of any of his feeble creatures in order to accomplish what he determines shall be done? The worm turned over with his spade, can render the gardener more efficient aid in cultivating the soil, than the most perfect of his creatures can give to the great Creator in effecting any of his purposes.

It is for ourselves that he deigns to use us even in bringing good to ourselves; for our own benefit it is, that he allows us to labor in his service, that he is ever pleased to make us

the blessed instruments of good to others. It is for our own improvement that we are permitted, encouraged, commanded, to pray. It is that we may give an earnest of our sincerity, that he requires that labors should attend our prayers, and prayers accompany our labors, in order that both may be blessed, that our hearts may be disciplined in the exercise of faith, and our souls prepared for the enjoyment of the high and holy pleasures which await the faithful.

If he saw fit, he could do all without us which he accomplishes by us, as easy as he can rend the mountain by his lightning, or distil the waters of the ocean by the heat of his sun, that they may return in refreshing showers to the earth; but unless he also changed our natures, our souls would then become as inert as the one, and as vacillating as the other. He could effect all the good he purposes for mankind without their intervention, as easy as he can make the grass grow upon the prairie for the wild buffalo; as easily as he can feed the ravens when they cry unto him; it is because he has made man for a higher destiny than the bird or the beast, that he has allowed him to be the instrument of securing to himself most of the blessings he intends to confer upon him.

In the administration of the universe he makes use of means to effect all his purposes, and there is nothing which more fully displays the power and wisdom of the great Architect, than that every thing is brought to its proper place and at its proper time, by the agency of secondary causes. If we had before us two watches of apparently excellent workmanship, and we found the one would go for weeks and months, keeping exact time by the operation of its own machinery, while the other required the daily attentions of its owner to set it right, which should we say was made by the most skilful workman? And again, we see in the works of man that the most excellent instruments are used to effect the most important purposes; how thankful, then, should we be to our Almighty Creator that he has seen fit to employ us in so much more noble exercises than any other of his terrestrial creatures. He has made us alone capable of praising and of serving him, and of doing good by voluntary action to our fellow-creatures; and in this way he has arranged us in the same class with the holy and happy angels who surround his throne; as he does them, so also does he deign to employ us, as the messengers of his mercy. And still more, as our blessed

Saviour intercedes for us before the throne of the Eternal, so may we also plead for others in his name at the footstool of the same mercy seat. Should we not rejoice in this great privilege and delight to be thus honored; and should not then our labors and our prayers go hand in hand that both may be blessed together?

But will not the Almighty ever hear our prayers, except so far as we labor to effect the object of our petitions? If it is so, then must we ask protection in vain for our absent friends when they are beyond the reach of our own help. But it is not the case, as every Christian parent feels in his own heart, who commends to a prayer-hearing God a son far distant upon the ocean; or, who is exposed to the temptations of the world from which no parent's care can guard him. Faith whispers that the Almighty arm is around his offspring in every place, and is better than ramparts of stone, to protect him from evil.

And it may happen with regard to the spiritual welfare of some who are dear to us, that we may not be able to bring our personal efforts to bear upon them; and it must always

be, that we cannot labor individually for the conversations of the greater part of the nations of the earth? Does it follow that we can do no good by praying for them? No true Christian can assent to such a doctrine; but the language of his heart must be, let us labor and pray; where we cannot labor, let us still pray; for who knows whether by us, or by others, God will do good to our fellow men.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF CIRCUMSTANCES ON THE CHRISTIAN'S CHARACTER.

Mankind are ever prone to pass judgment upon the conduct of others as well as to form an estimate upon their own actions. In both cases are their opinions fallible; and they are liable to err, but from different causes; in their own, they can judge impartially if they will; but the will is generally wanting: with regard to others, they have not the power, but the disposition is too often made to supply its place. In a word, every one may know what obligations to the faithful discharge of his duty, his

own advantages impose upon him; but he cannot know all the circumstances of another which may have an influence upon his actions. Wherefore true Christian charity demands, that we should be moderate in our expectations from others, for those who may appear to have done but little in their Master's cause, at the last day we may find to have done much; while some who we now think, are very zealous and faithful, may then appear to have effected no real good, but to have done all that they are now doing, from a spirit of ostentation, or from some other selfish motive.

But true Christian faithfulness will lead us to be exact in judging our own conduct and the motives which govern it; for we must all know the mercies we have received, and the blessings we have enjoyed; or at least, all may know, if they will consider how much they have tried the patience of God, and how long-suffering he has been towards them; they must know how they have sinned, and whether they hope that they have been forgiven; and they must know the abundance of mercies they have received, and how little they have deserved them. Wherefore every one should desire, in return, to do what he can to please the gracious God who has been so good to him; and if

he knows the Almighty cannot be benefited by any thing he may do, he will, unless his heart is the seat of such black ingratitude, as, shown towards a fellow-creature, would make him despised by mankind, he will still desire to do all he can, were it only to show his love for his great Benefactor.

As he cannot know exactly another's capacity for doing good, nor how much good any other may really do, nor what counteracting influences any one may have to overcome; therefore, it is not right for an individual to be strict in applying rules to others. Yet it is right that such lines of duty should be marked out in the abstract; and, as we may each be acquainted with the circumstances of our own case, we need not fear to make the application to ourselves.

I have before observed that men are disposed to measure the good done by themselves and by others, by the amount of money contributed towards benevolent enterprises, and that this estimate is in general absolute and not comparative. A more deceptive method of computation could scarcely be hit upon, even supposing individuals, in all cases, are actuated by right motives.

Suppose there are two persons in similar circumstances with regard to their families and associations, but that one receives an income, say of a thousand and the other of two thousand dollars; if they both contribute equal sums to charitable objects, it is very evident that they are making very unequal efforts.

But suppose they follow the practice adopted by some, of tithing their income: does the one then do as much in proportion to his circumstances as the other does? They are similarly situated in society, and to simplify the case, we will suppose that one thousand dollars is about sufficient in the station they occupy to provide for them, what are properly called the necessaries and comforts of life. Then to pay his tithe, the poorer man must sacrifice a portion of these comforts, whereas the other, though he pays double the sum, will have eight hundred dollars of superfluity to hoard or to spend on luxuries. It is very clear which of the two, in the sight of God, contributes the greatest gift.

I am far from believing that a man to whom God has entrusted a large share of worldly goods, may not reasonably and properly, and without incurring the charge of unfaithfulness, spend a larger sum upon his own or his family

comforts, than should a poorer man, who is otherwise similarly situated. But if both are alike actuated by love to God, he will not satisfy himself with the same specific, nor even with the same proportional contributions to the relief of the poor and the destitute, which is the cause of his Saviour.

And yet, it ought not to be thought that the rich man can serve God so easily, nor so comfortably, as his neighbor who is in more moderate circumstances: his facilities are less for serving him even in the contribution of money, because he has many more difficulties to overcome in order to make an acceptable offering.

In the first place, those who have the command of much money are very apt, and sometimes unconsciously, to fall into habits of expense and indulgence. Luxuries we soon begin to consider necessaries; and the more they are multiplied, the harder do we cling to each particular one, and the harder do we find it to part with any in order to please God. But on the other hand, when we do deprive ourselves of those things which we have learned to consider so essential for his sake, it becomes so much the more acceptable a sacrifice. It matters not that these things do not add to

our real happiness, or, that we shall be more comfortable when we have given them up. The sacrifice lies not in the advantages we derive from them, but in our own estimate of their advantages.

Again, it is the natural and almost unavoidable effect of possessing wealth, to cause men to cling to the riches themselves, and to depend upon them. Even the rich Christian finds it more difficult than another to realize his dependence upon God for his daily food, though both alike, are fed by his bounty. It is often observed that the man who earns his living by the exertions of each day, more readily parts with a small sum of money than does the possessor of millions. It is not because there is any original difference in the constitution of the individuals; but it is, because the almost inevitable effect of accumulating riches, is to dry up every generous sentiment in the heart. This then is another no small difficulty, against which the wealthy Christian has to contend in his heavenward course; but let him remember for his encouragement, that each impediment which he can overcome, will improve his character, make more bright his faith, and more sure his reward.

But after he has conquered so far, after

these two formidable foes have been subdued, there is yet a more potent enemy to be met by the wealthy disciple: and he must keep on his armor and push forward from victory to victory, if he would wish to overcome at the last. The flesh and the world have been subdued, but the devil now occupies his path; or rather, he skirmishes on the sides and besets him in the rear, and he must be vigilant, or the tempter will make him betray his master's cause at last.

Or in other words, when the arch fiend finds he cannot by the allurements of luxury, nor by the love of wealth, prevent the Christian from serving God with his substance, he will attack him in his motives in hopes to make every sacrifice an abomination. Mankind are so in the habit of measuring praise by the largeness of a gift, and men's hearts are so open to the flattery of each other's opinions, that those who possess the power of giving largely and use it as it should be used, are in very great danger of receiving detriment themselves, as well as of being prevented from doing good to others. It is not that there is danger that they will be prevented from giving; but that they will give from a wrong motive, for the sake of the applause of their fellow men, and not from

love to God. It is very, very hard, to preserve the heart under the influence of the love of God in doing what will expose us to the flattery of man's praise: and yet it must be done, if we would do our Heavenly Father any acceptable service. The rich man no less than the poor, has cause to be humbled and abased before the God against whom he has sinned.

It is in this spirit alone, that any can hope to please their Maker. The sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart he will not despise, though it can lay but a single mite upon his altar; but the offering of the vain-glorious fool, though he bring thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil, can be nothing but an abomination in his sight. For the good of our own souls then, and for the good of the souls of others, how important is it, and yet for the rich man, how difficult to keep the flame of the right spirit burning in the breast!

Thus on the steep ascent to Mount Zion, we see that the wealthy pilgrim has many more obstacles to surmount, many more difficulties to overcome; he is attacked with more inveterate foes upon the way, than the more obscure disciple; while his soul, is clogged in every movement by the weight of his money bags. These are a continual drawback in his course

if he keeps them to himself, and if, as a Christian should, he uses them in God's service, they still throw impediments in his way, against which, it is essential that he should employ all his vigilance to keep up the necessary guard.

It is difficult, so difficult that our Saviour says it is impossible, for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. But it is only while they trust in themselves,or as they are so prone to do, in their riches, that it is impossible ; our Lord, for their encouragement, tells them that with God, all things are possible. Eternal life is of as much consequence to them as to others, though it is so much more hard to be obtained: godly living is to them of even more importance, since they have placed in their hands more abundant means of doing God service, since they occupy a more conspicuous station than others.

It is not then without reason, when the rich man becomes the humble, faithful, servant of Jesus, that we give him the first place in our estimation. Inasmuch as he has had greater impediments in his way, he must have obtained a larger measure of grace than another man, if he has attained to the same eminence on the holy mount. His character must shine brighter

and clearer, and his heart must be more holy and heavenly for the vigorous efforts he has been obliged to make, in progressing so far on his way to the celestial city. Every allurement to pleasure which he has resisted, has added a Christian grace to his soul: every covetous desire which he has repelled, has increased his heavenly treasure, has planted a bright jewel in his crown of eternal joys; every disposition to vainglory which he has disdainfully driven from his heart, has raised him a degree above this present world, and brought him so much nearer and made to him so much surer the better inheritance for which he waits.

But it is not only, nor even chiefly, with regard to the distribution of his money, that the rich man's wealth proves a hindrance in rendering God the service which is his due.—There are others, and vastly more important, duties to be performed, to which his circumstances will prove an impediment; and this remark applies not only to the wealthy, but to all who in any way are distinguished from and lifted above the mass of the people: the improved intellect, the refined taste, habits of command, and of being looked up to and treated with deference by others, are all so

many difficulties which lie in the way of performing humble Christian duties.

The custom of having the direction of extensive concerns, causes a man to look with indifference on those of smaller moment; and even those of the most acknowledged importance, are apt to excite less interest in a man thus circumstanced, than others of less consequence in themselves, but which in their execution, require a combination of larger operations. Add to this, that the nature of mankind inclines them to place the most weight upon such things as immediately concern themselves, rather than on those which may benefit their neighbor, although by the last, they may be doing immediate service to their Maker; and we shall see, that those who give up their own selfish interest that they may please God, by attending to the petty details often necessary in the fulfilment of Christian duty, we shall see that they, are making sacrifices involving no inconsiderable degree of self denial.

Accordingly, when one of the Missionaries at the Sandwich Islands, saw the steward of the Mission dressed in a laborer's frock, driving his yoke of cattle, and going about any where and every where, to minister to the wants and

convenience of his fellow laborers in the Lord's vineyard, he could not, he said, but feel admiration for the greatness of soul displayed by that man, who had given up the lucrative and extensive commercial transactions in which he had been engaged, that he might take upon himself the laborious and self denying office of a servant, to a mission among a nation of savages.

His admiration was not misplaced. Had it been a farmer, accustomed to coarse fare, to hard labor, and to small profits, who had taken upon himself such duties, he would have been thought worthy of very great praise; but every one must see, that it was a greater effort of magnanimity for a man, thus differently circumstanced, to have done it.

And when a man highly endowed by nature, and with a mind improved by education, and who has been accustomed to intellectual association, leaves the place where this enjoyment is within his reach; and when he goes where he can only meet half-civilized, brutal people, that he may do good to their souls, must it not require a greater impulse of love to urge him on to the enterprize, than it would a man who had no capacity for, nor perception of, these pleasures?

When the yellow fever was in Philadelphia, and the most eminent physicians believed it to be contagious, a man was seen bringing from a house in one of the deserted streets, another, whose sallow complexion marked him as a victim of the dreaded disease. The sick man's face rested against that of his benevolent supporter as he hung helplessly in his arms; he was placed in a carriage and driven off to the purer air of the country, which probably preserved his life.

If it had been an inhabitant of a neighboring garret, who had been accustomed to dwell among filth and impurity, who had done this deed of mercy, it would not have been so much thought of; but when it was known that this benevolent man was Stephen Girard, the richest man in America, and perhaps in the world; that he had left the salubrious air of his farm to seek out in the abodes of disease and death, amidst the uncleanness and pollution, and in the contaminated atmosphere of the bye-ways of a great city, an object on whom he could exercise his benevolence: do we not feel that the value of the act of kindness was greatly enhanced by the attending circumstances? And who will not say, that the heart that could

impel a man to such an act, was of more worth than all his hoarded treasure?

Again, we have all heard of the philanthropist Howard. Who is there that loves to see human nature in its best forms, the human heart in the exercise of its noblest of powers, the power of serving God in relieving the miseries and administering to the wants of his suffering creatures, but must love and revere the memory of this good man? There is no one who is not sunk to the lowest ebb of human depravity, but must admire his character displayed in his self-denying labors, in his perseverance in doing good to the wicked, abandoned, and miserable outcasts, to whose relief he devoted so large a portion of his existence.

When I have read of his visiting the close damp dungeons of a prison, that he might mitigate the lot of its wretched inmates, by attending to their minutest comforts; when I have read of his exposing himself to the infection of the horrid gaol fever, personally looking into the little details necessary for the relief of its unhappy victims, bearing patiently, with ingratitude and reproach, and persevering in spite of the opposition of those who should

have strengthened his hands; finally, when I found him wandering thousands of miles from his home, on his errand of mercy, refusing to associate with the great lest it should interfere with his mission to the poor, wicked, and degraded captive; when I saw him bearing heat and cold, and hunger, and watching, till, at last, worn down by his labors, he reached a far distant land on the outskirts of civilization, and there, with unwearied diligence but enfeebled powers, set himself to stay the ravages of the dreadful plague; till, at last, he fell its victim, dying far from home and friends, in a strange land, among a half-savage people, deprived of all the comforts to which he had been accustomed in his earlier days to look for the mitigation of sickness; when I have read and heard of all this, I have thought it was impossible that any man could have become more exalted in my views of his character.

And yet I must acknowledge that my opinion of the greatness of this man was much increased when afterwards the circumstances of his home came to my knowledge; when I knew how many comforts and enjoyments he had left to take these self-denying duties upon him.

His association was among the exalted in intellect, the refined in manners, the pure in heart so far as purity exists upon the earth. If his station was not the first for worldly grandeur, it was one much more conducive to happiness; raised above the necessity of incessant toil in order to gain a livelihood, he was not so much above the ordinary level as to cause him to be an object of envy, as to turn those who should be warm-hearted friends into hollow sycophants. He was removed from the ambitious turmoil of political strife; and he was placed where he might pass his days in peace and quietness, while he filled a sufficient place in the public eye, to secure the full amount of respect and influence which his character might gain for him.

He did not live in the crowded tumult of a city, but amidst the simple manners, in the pure air, and in the midst of the delightful scenery of the country; there he possessed a noble mansion with pleasant gardens, in the midst of a fine estate; there was he surrounded with kind friends and with faithful servants and dependents, who were living in the enjoyment of the comforts his bounty had provided for them; who were rearing their families around him, looking to him for sympathy in affliction, for assistance in trouble, for consolation in sorrow,

loving and almost adoring him for his goodness and benevolence. And these friends were Christian friends, and these servants were Christians too; of course, the first were sincere, and the last were faithful.

Possessing so many elements of earthly comfort, it is very natural that he should have desired to live in the enjoyment of them; and the extent of his benevolence was marked in no small degree by the fact, that he was willing to yield them up in order to do good to those who could have no other claims upon his attention but their miseries. He was willing to leave the society of kind, intelligent, Christian friends, to converse with the ignorant, profane and brutal turnkeys of a prison; and he was not ashamed humbly to plead with them to show mercy towards the poor convicts of their charge. He was ready to leave behind his faithful, loving domestics, whose delight it was to minister to his wants, that he might, in his turn, serve the poor profligate, whose crimes had cut him from the sympathy of his species and even from the pure air of heaven. He could exchange his neat parlor and his comfortable library for the damp, moulding dungeon, that he might see the filth removed and its inmates made a little less wretched. The healthy atmosphere of his pleasant gardens,

could not tempt him from breathing the air polluted and made contagious by the pestilential exhalations of the infected and crowded gaol.

Now, does not each of these circumstances of comfort which this benevolent man gave up that he might go about doing good—does not each one, add a fresh lustre to his character? Does not the yielding up of each of these increase the sacrifice which he made for the sake of his unhappy fellow-creatures? And did not his devotion consist as much or more in the sacrifices he made, as it did in the labors he accomplished or in the pain which he endured?

If I have labored to prove that the rich man has many more things to give up, and many more obstacles to overcome, if he would serve God in singleness of heart, than is the case with the poor, and that, consequently, that when he does thus serve him, he commonly attains to a higher mark of Christian excellence, it is not because I would discourage the poorer man from aiming at the highest mark, nor that I would place a stumbling block of pride in the way of the rich disciple. The

fact is, that the standard of piety among the wealthy, the learned, and the refined, is, in general, so very low, even where we cannot suppose the reality of religion to be wanting, that we may commonly look in vain among this class for any very high attainments. It is among the poor, or, perhaps more properly, among those in the state which the wisdom of Solomon led him to describe as the happiest, where God has given neither poverty nor riches; it is among these, that we must look for spirituality of mind and for devotion of heart.

We occasionally meet with a Howard or a Wilberforce among the rich and great; with a Newton, a Boyle, or a Cowper, among men of letters and science; but the quota of those who arrive at great spiritual attainments in these classes is very small, and the lowly station is, after all, the one most favorable to the growth of the religious affections.

It is not, as I said before, to draw a comparison between these classes that I have referred to the great and good man whose character I have been considering; but to use the circumstances of his life as an illustration for another purpose. And that I shall endeavor to do in the following pages.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

THE FAITHFUL MISSIONARY.

If a person, placed in a situation and under circumstances to promote the greatest enjoyment of his life, with the ties of kindred affection fast bound about his heart, were to come to the knowledge of a community who had given themselves over to every crime and to every vice, and in consequence had sunk to the very lowest state of degradation, and were suffering the greatest extreme of misery; and if he were thereupon, immediately to set about doing something for their relief, and finding that nothing else was likely to avail but the preaching of the Gospel, which would elevate their minds from their debasement, and prepare them to estimate virtue and for the enjoyment of happiness, if he were to sever all his ties of kindred, leave the home of his affections, and all the elements which had before given enjoyment to his life behind him, and go forth

to carry the glad tidings to the poor wretches, participating in the miseries of their lot, and having no more congenial associates, should we not think that his benevolence was great indeed? Would it not be too much to expect from any individual?

Let us suppose him to be a person of an highly endowed and cultivated mind, and with a heart glowing with the kindliest and most generous affections; that he could appreciate to the utmost the enjoyments growing out of social relations and intellectually refined society, while, at the same time, he possessed such purity of heart, that he could take pleasure in nothing which had not moral beauty to recommend it.

In some countries the eldest son is the sole heir to the patrimonial estates, and is considered as in full possession almost equally with his father, even during the father's life. This person was so situated with the full command of an extensive property, which he enjoyed in common with his indulgent father, whose chief delight in his possessions was to please his son. A numerous family of brothers and sisters looked to him as to a second father, and

had every want supplied by his bountiful kindness, which seemed ever to keep him on the watch that he might find opportunities to add to their comforts. In every trouble, each knew where to go for sympathy or for relief—sure of a response in his faithful heart; even the tottering babe would always flee to his arms, to unload its little cares into his affectionate bosom;—and those arms and that heart were ever open to receive them. His numerous dependents delighted to serve him, while they knew he took an interest in the least of them, and that he was ever ready to give attention to any thing which concerned their happiness.

This family lived together in perfect love and good will; for such was the influence and example of their head, that there was never any jealousy or jarring among them. As he was always striving to do kindness to them, they, in like manner, were watchful for opportunities to please him, and to do good to one another; each was made happier for every kind office that he did, while, at the same time, he added to the happiness of each one around him. Those who have learned the pleasures of such reciprocal kindness, can find little enjoyment in such as are coarse and selfish;

consequently, while this family had within their reach every indulgence which wealth could purchase, they sought only such as were intellectual, pure and refined.

But while they were thus in possession of every enjoyment heart could desire, they knew that others were living in a state of misery. While they were dwelling in the practice of every virtue and reaping its just reward of happiness, there were those upon earth who had given themselves up to every vice, and were suffering its certain recompense. They were continually striving to improve every good quality of their minds and hearts, knowing that thereby they were constantly adding to their means of enjoyment; but the poor heathen, of whom they heard, were as eagerly following the paths of sin, in spite of their still increasing wretchedness.

Now, why should those who were thus living in happiness, and who thus deserved to be happy, allow their tranquillity to be disturbed by those who were less blessed, but whose vices richly merited the recompense of misery which they endured? Yet it was so; for the heart trained to kindness cannot but feel another's wo; and when that is the consequence of the

individual's vices, this circumstance will but increase the pity felt by the pure in mind for their more degraded brother. The good man must feel compassion for the miseries, but much more, for the degradation of the vicious.

But though they may pity, and so far as they can, may administer relief; yet, when it comes to be necessary that individuals should sacrifice all their own comforts and enjoyments in order effectually to do so, it must be acknowledged that it will require a very great degree of self denial. Consequently, when this family heard of the miserable wretches who were living in far distant lands, we may suppose that none of them were very eager to give up the comforts of their happy home to go to their assistance. As they spake of the unhappy people, of their vileness and their stubborn wickedness, and their almost hopeless misery, the tears of sympathy would steal down their cheeks; but when they thought that they could only help them by turning their backs upon the most endeared relations, and upon all the sources of their former comfort, their hearts would fail, and they would draw back from the self-denying duty.

But he who had taught them to love one

another, who had led them in the way of doing good; he, who had shown them how to be happy by making each other happy,—he now shew them how the heart might be exercised in these more disinterested acts of benevolence. He had travelled through the dark borders of Paganism, and his heart was moved with pity at the deep debasement, the sin and misery he beheld.

When he returned to his home, his friends crowded around to welcome one they all loved so well; and eagerly did they inquire what he had seen abroad. He could only tell them of the heathen, the poor degraded heathen whom he had visited, and tears of pity were brought to their eyes as he recounted their miseries. "But something must be done for their relief," he said. Something ought to be done, if possible, they all agreed; but, then, what was to be done? How could those be made happy who are wretched from the effects of their own vices, and who hug the chains of vice, galling as they are! How can those be assisted who are suffering from their debasement, but seem in love with degradation! The effects of missions were not then known, or they might have seen that there was one way, by which, even the vicious idolater might be enlightened and made comparatively virtuous and happy.

But the elder brother saw this way, and he said, "they must be taught to love and serve God: and then, they will be happy."

"And how can *they* be made to love God, who are living in such open rebellion? How can those be brought to do right, who have all their lives done wrong? In whom habits of vice have become a second nature!"

"Is not the Gospel sufficient to effect the change? Why do you love God, except it is that he first loved you? And may not the poor heathen, in like manner, be made to love him? Send to them then the glad tidings of peace, the hopes of pardon, the promise of reconciliation."

None could deny that their own love was based on the love of the Almighty, which they felt in every blessing they enjoyed: and they knew that the sense of that love was the richest of those blessings, and gave a coloring of beauty to all the rest: this it was which made them doubly valued. If the heathen could be made to know and to estimate that love, it was all that was required to make them virtuous and happy. All would allow that the preaching of the Gospel was sufficient for this; but then, how could it be preached in such far distant lands? The elder brother replied,

"It can only be preached by men living among them."

"That is true," his brethren said, "but who would be willing to go? Who would be willing to dwell among those people, surrounded as they are with the most disgusting filth? who would consent to come in contact with vice in its most loathsome forms, beholding daily the most abject misery which he cannot relieve? who would agree to subject himself to injuries and insult, perhaps, to imprisonment, slavery, or death, and all these too, from the very individuals for whom he had sacrificed all his own comforts, for whom, he had wearied himself with labor, and endured pain and suffering?"

"Of all these things," he replied, "I know that he must take the risk, who would go upon such an errand of mercy; and of suffering a portion of them, he may feel assured. For, it is unreasonable to expect that those who have dwelt all their lives in darkness, should at first comprehend the light; neither can we suppose that they who are degraded by every vice, will not add ingratitude to the rest. But, notwithstanding all that he may be obliged to give up, notwithstanding all that he may be called upon to endure, he will be repaid, richly repaid, for

every thing, by the pleasure of relieving the distressed and of elevating the degraded; but, above all, will he be rewarded in the approbation of his God."

"The rewards no doubt are great, but the success is so uncertain and the sufferings so sure, that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to find any one who would endure the one for the chance of the other. Who would be willing to do it?"

"I know of one who will," he replied, "I will go myself."

"You, you!" they all exclaimed, "you go! who have such a pleasant home where you are so happy yourself, and where you make those so happy who surround you; will you go and leave all behind?"

"The sacrifices which I must make, are indeed very great; but nevertheless I will go, for my heart yearns over the poor heathen, and I may perhaps help to relieve some of the misery which I have seen."

"And can you willingly give up this pleasant house of which you have been so long master, to dwell in one of their filthy huts?"

"I cannot expect to find so comfortable a dwelling, perhaps, not so clean: but I should think the less of their dirty hovels, did they

not figure forth the worse defilement of their hearts."

"And with those hearts you must also come in contact, you must suffer from their perfidy and their selfishness; you must bear with their ingratitude, and with their malice and envy: and for these wretches, will you leave your pleasant home, your faithful dependents, your father and your brethren, all of whom look so much to you for their happiness! Indeed, we cannot part with our brother so!"

"'Tis true, that when I think of my happy home, I am unwilling to leave it; but then, I think of those who have no such home, but who might have, if they had the Gospel of peace and reconciliation, which makes all pleasant about it; and I think that I can carry them this Gospel, and I feel willing to make the sacrifice. I look upon my brethren dwelling together in unity and love; and it is not strange I should be unwilling to be separated from them: but I remember, that I have seen brothers mutilated and murdered by brothers; and I long to tell them how God has loved them, that they may learn to love one another. But when I look upon my dear father, and see his face beaming with kindness towards me and towards all around; then—then—is the

hardest trial; and my heart almost fails me. But I look back to the lands of heathen darkness, where parents are destroying their own children; and I ask myself, Shall I not give up this—even this also, that I may loosen the murderous grasp from the throats of helpless babes, and save their natural protectors from the guilt of murdering their own offspring? Shall I not be willing to deny myself the comforts of home, the society of brethren and friends, and even banish myself from the presence of my dear father who loves me and whom I love so much, when I consider the sad state of those I go to relieve; when I think of the depths of wickedness to which so many millions are sunk, and of the load of misery under which, whole nations are groaning?"

"You will partake of their sufferings," his brethren replied, "without being able to relieve them; for it is almost certain, that but few will listen to you; and from the rest, you can expect nothing but abuse and injuries."

"Well, be it so: for those few will I gladly make the sacrifice; and for their sake, will I put up with any indignities to which I may be subject."

"And even for those, do you think you will better their condition? You will but expose

them to the envy, hatred, and ill-will of their neighbors; it is most probable, they will have to endure persecutions for listening to you."

"And if it be so, they will be happier under persecutions than under the dominion of vice: they will enjoy peace of mind which no outward circumstances can disturb, and they shall be made heirs of eternal life."

His friends found their arguments all in vain; and they could not but wonder at the fixedness of his resolution. They could only admire the extent of that benevolence from which it arose, which, could induce him to do so much for those, whose vices he could not but detest, while he felt pity for the miseries which were their consequence. His father alone was not surprised, for he only knew the depth of his love and the purity of his heart.

When the little ones found that he was indeed going to leave them, they clung weeping about his knees. They could not, they said, let their dear brother go: their pleasures would be but half enjoyed, if he did not help to make them pleasant by joining in them. And to whom could they go with their tiny sorrows, and be sure to find an ear ever open to listen, and a hand ever ready to assist them. They were sure they should not be half so

good when they could not see how good he was, and when, he could no longer smile an approval of their conduct.

He kindly took the prattlers into his arms, and told them how the poor Pagan children were abused, and made to suffer hunger, and thirst, and cold, and heat, without the protection which they enjoyed; that their limbs were often mangled or their lives destroyed by their unnatural parents; that many, were sold into hopeless slavery to be oppressed by strangers far from their own homes. He asked them to think of the poor little heathen, with actual pain and suffering added to the desolation of a broken heart; and then, could they say that they were unwilling to give up some portion of their own indulgencies to send comfort to these poor distressed children? They could not say they wished to withhold relief; and they would not say, they were willing to part with their friend.

But notwithstanding the unwillingness of friends and the pleading of his own heart, his resolution remained unshaken. He left his happy home with all its refined enjoyments, and all its associations of love; and he found none of his sacrifices undervalued and none of his sufferings over-estimated. But he contin-

ued faithful, and in the end received his reward in the fruits of his labors.

It may be supposed that his brethren followed him in his exile with their best wishes, and soon one and another began to desire to take a share in his work, and followed him to the field of his labors. And occasionally, one would go back, and then all would collect around to hear the report of their far distant friend, and while they would weep at the recital of his sufferings, their hearts would rejoice at his success. Nevertheless, they could not but long for his return to them.

Is not such an example worthy our imitation? It may be said, that no one has ever enjoyed such complete happiness as I have attempted to describe; and if any had, he would not have been willing to have given it up for the mere desire to do good to others. This would be rather a hasty conclusion; for it was for the sake of pointing to an individual that I have attempted this little sketch,—to show what faithful love should glow in the heart of every Christian, and to urge each one from the example, to endeavor to kindle such a flame in his own breast, that he may act from it in

his life. And yet I had not the story of any particular individual in view in what I have now written, though I believe it contains the moral history of many a faithful missionary. But my chief object in this and in the reference I have before made to benevolent individuals, has been to draw attention to one whose love has been the stimulus to all their efforts, —to one, who has done more for us than we can do for him or for one another; who sacrificed for us more than any mortal can possess, who suffered more, than any finite being could feel or endure.

He was dwelling in his Father's bosom;—who can estimate that Father's love! What earthly home can be more than a feeble type of the excellency of his Father's house, and what earthly comfort can be taken to form a judgment of the pleasures of that heavenly dwelling place! By what mortal affection can we measure the love and reverence with which his blest associates in heaven beheld the Son of God, the chief of their happy company, the express image of his Father and their Father; and by what human faithfulness, can we judge of their consequent delight in serving him! Let us imagine all that is delightful in the

most endearing association of parental and fraternal affection, and of the purest and most perfect love among beings capable of enjoying nothing which is not holy. Let us suppose such a society, free, as they must necessarily be, from all wicked passions and wicked thoughts, and from the attendant and consequent evils; and we can, after all, form but a faint idea of what the blessed Saviour gave up for you, reader, and for me, and for all, if we will accept the mercy freely offered to us; and it is the enjoyment of such society, which he has purchased for all believers.

We may, by the kind providence of God, have our lot cast in a pleasant land, a land of peace and plenty, a land of social security, of civil and religious liberty; we may be living in the enjoyment of a quiet home, surrounded by kind and Christian friends, and by affectionate relatives in the midst of an industrious, moral community; and we may be placed in a nation blessed, as indeed we are, above all the nations of the earth; we may have within our reach, and we may appreciate the society of the gifted and learned; we may be in the habit of associating with the pure in heart and the refined in taste; we may have at our com-

mand every indulgence which wealth can procure, or which a rational mind can desire; and we may receive all our blessings as the gifts of our kind Father in heaven, and prize them chiefly on that account; but, if we are unwilling to give up any or all of our advantages, that we may the more effectually serve our God and our Saviour, then we have not such love as is a worthy return for the love shown towards us.

It may be that we can serve God as well in the enjoyment of those blessings which we chiefly prize, and when we can do so, it would be folly to give them up. It may be much worse than folly to refuse these rational comforts which God has placed within our reach, that we may thankfully enjoy and glorify him by receiving them with grateful hearts; because, this would savor of a self-righteous spirit, the spirit that governs the children of the mother of abominations, which leads them to mortify their bodies that they may minister to the pride of their sinful hearts; or that, by doing penance in the flesh, they may satisfy the divine justice for the iniquity of their transgressions, hoping, by their own pains, and sufferings, and self denial, to make atonement for the guilt from which we can only look for de-

liverance to the great and gracious Saviour,—the Lamb of God which was slain to take away the sins of the world. Such a sacrifice of the blessings he has provided for our enjoyment, and such an endurance of pains which he never intended for us to bear, can never be an acceptable offering to the Almighty; can never have any merit with him, but must be an abomination in his sight.

But when we can indeed do him more extended service by giving up, for his sake, any portion of our own enjoyments or advantages; and when, in reality, we can do it from love to him and tender pity for our fallen race, it is then, whether it be a small or whether it be a great matter—it is then an acceptable sacrifice to God; and we may hope that any blessing which we may be the instruments of conferring upon our fellow-creatures, will be returned with increase to our own souls. And does not the pitiable condition of mankind loudly call upon us for any sacrifices we can make which would help to rescue them from their present unhappy state, and from the fearful doom which awaits them in the world to come. Thousands are daily tasting the bitterness of that death, which must have been our portion too, but for the atoning blood of Jesus; and

can we, in return for the great love he has shown towards us, do too much in making them acquainted with the free offers of redemption he has made to all, and which, because we have accepted them for ourselves, enable us to look forward with a calm, if not with a joyful expectation, to the world to come; which world, but for this great salvation, could present to us only a prospect of horrors! Remembering what the blessed Saviour gave up for us, will our thankful hearts permit us to withhold aught from him, by the sacrifice of which, we can show a grateful sense of the many benefits received at his hands.

Are we in possession of houses and lands, and do we hesitate to give them up in the cause of such a Saviour? have we a pleasant home, and do we draw back when called to exchange it for one less comfortable, that we may give full scope to the pity our hearts may feel for our less favored fellow-creatures? Then let us remember, what would our condition have been had our blessed Lord felt as we feel; if his love had not proved sufficient to cause him to make this sacrifice for us, where should we be, and what would have been our condition now? And what would have been our eternal destiny! What are our possessions, even when we have all that this world can afford, if we

compare them with what the Son of God had in his power as he sat on the right hand of the majesty on high; he could create worlds by a single word, yet he gave up all for a time, and abased himself to open to us a way of salvation! And what is the comfort of the best of our earthly homes, as compared to the felicity of those heavenly mansions where he dwelt! Yet he was willing to leave this seat of blessedness for a while, that he might purchase for *us* an inheritance there. If Jesus so loved us, should we not also love one another? If he pitied us in our low estate, ought we not to have pity for others in a like fallen condition; and shall we not, like him, be ready to make sacrifices for their sake, when for his sake, also, we are called upon to do it?

But, perhaps, it may suggest itself to some, that, however great the sacrifices he made, it was but for a time, and that he returned again to the blessed inheritance which he had left; whereas, if they give up their possessions, or leave their homes to go on an errand of mercy to their fellow-creatures, they cannot return to them again! And is it indeed so with you, fellow Christian? Do you, indeed, take so congracted a view? 'Tis true, you may not again return to your earthly homes; you may not retain the possessions which you have given up;

but still, your sacrifices are but for a time. You are heir to a far richer inheritance than any you can here possess; you are going to a happier—far happier home, within the heavens, even the home where your Saviour dwells, and where you will be partaker with him of the same rich inheritance.

But they are not houses, nor lands, nor trees, nor flowers, which constitute our home; but it is the endeared association of kind friends and affectionate relations whom love has bound about our hearts with its seven fold cord. These, we think, we cannot part with; and it is not often necessary, nor even expedient, that we should. But, if our Saviour's service seems to demand it, shall we refuse even this to him? Jesus might well say not only, that those who refused to quit houses or lands for his sake, were not worthy of him; but also, that those who preferred to him their fathers or mothers, their wives or their children, were likewise unworthy of him; because, if he had sacrificed such things for us, he has a right to expect that we will do the same for his sake. And has he not sacrificed stronger claims of kindred than can bind us to earthly creatures?

Was not his associations in the heavens dearer to him, than any earthly society can be to our hearts? Who can be so bold, as to compare the endearment of an earthly parent to the fulness of his Father's love? And can any other of our social connections be more dear to us, than was the blest company of heaven to this their chief, the son of their Father and their God, to whom they looked with the perfect love of pure and holy beings; whom they admired for his wisdom, adored for his power, and loved for his goodness, with an all-absorbing affection? To him they looked as to the source of their chief joy: it was their greatest pleasure to do his will; their honor was placed in serving him; they were eager in seeking occasions and flew off with the speed of lightning to attend his calls; and when their mission was accomplished, they were more than repaid by his smile of approbation. And did *he* not love them who were thus affectionate and faithful, he, who was love itself, so that he even loved us who made no return to his kindness—us, who have been perverse, rebellious, inconstant! He, who was the source and fountain of purity and holiness, would he not regard those who reflected his spotless image and who were dis-

gusted with any thing which was defiled by sin; and if he did not, would he notice us who have been polluted and have delighted in uncleanness! And was it no sacrifice for him, to leave their blessed company to take up his residence in a wicked and unhappy world? And yet, he did leave them for our sakes; and can we bring this to our minds, and then say, there is any relative we would not leave for him? Remembering too, as we should, that as he left them but for a while to be joined to them again in heaven; so may we, expect to meet our dear friends in the same happy place. And further, we should consider that a life of godly devotion on our part, will prove the most effectual means to win them to seek an inheritance there.

When the holy angels heard that the Son of God was about to quit their happy company, that he might prepare redemption for sinners by dwelling among them, to bear himself the burden of their guilt, their minds must have been filled with astonishment at this wonderful exhibition of his love. Full of zeal for their Maker's glory, they were probably looking to see his vengeance executed speedily upon us, when this way of escape was opened

to excite their admiration, and to awaken afresh their songs of praise.

And was it to them no loss, that their good Lord, that their affectionate friend, that their kind elder brother, was to quit their society? It was their pleasure to be in his company; the brightness of his smiles seemed to constitute the happiness of heaven; if the light of his countenance was withdrawn, one chief source of their joy would be removed. But did they for this contend with him not to leave them? We cannot suppose they did, but that they would catch the flame of pity from his tender heart, and eagerly look forward to take any part he should see fit to allot them in this great enterprize. By nature benevolent, when they saw that it was consistent with the glory of their Maker, they would rejoice that the means of deliverance had been provided for our unhappy race. And if they could part with such a friend, that poor sinners, and ourselves among the rest, might be saved, can there be any friend who is so dear to us, or, whom we so much respect and honor, that we should be unwilling to part with him for the same benevolent purpose?

When the blessed Redeemer left his associates in heaven, they saw that he would be

exposed to toil and trouble, that he must bear sorrow and put up with reproach and contempt. But did they on that account put any obstacles in his way? We may suppose their love would prompt them to relieve him of any part of the burden, had it been possible for them to bear it in his stead: but not, that they would seek to turn him from his purposes of mercy which had called forth such acclamations of praise. They desire to look into the wonders of redeeming love, and would they take any measures to impede its exercise? They loved our Saviour better than they loved their own selves, with an energy, beyond the reach of mortal affections; yet were they willing he should make such sacrifices and take upon himself such a wearisome labor; and shall not we follow their example, if called upon to encourage any who are dear to us, in a like benevolent enterprize?

We may have friends who are dearer to us than ourselves, or, who at any rate we think are so; but if we are unwilling they should make sacrifices for their Saviour's sake, if we discourage them when they would follow his example and walk in his steps, is not our love a selfish love? It surely cannot resemble the pure feeling with which the angels of heaven

regarded the Son of God. Should we not rather, if we have any real affection for the same holy Being, encourage any of ours to the fulfilment of every good work, which their own hearts may have devised for them from love to God?

But it may be that it is our own children, whom we are called upon to part with in this way—those, to part with whom, it seems like tearing asunder the cords of life. But shall we withhold even them from our God? We all know how Abraham acted on a like occasion, but such an one as for intensity of interest, can never fall to our lot. He was called upon to slay with his own hand the son of his old age, as a sacrifice to the Almighty. It was no thing to be done upon the impulse of a moment; but, there was abundant time for consideration and reflection, and to weigh his love to his son against his faithfulness to God. The command was given in terms to set before him the full extent of the sacrifice which was required—"Take now thy son—thine only son Isaac—whom thou lovest"—as if God had said—Remember that it is thine own son I require of thee—'tis Isaac, the only son of thy long-tried and faithful wife, through

whom the blessing has been promised to thy seed, and who is now grown very old;—think too, how much thy affections are bound up in him;—place my command against these circumstances, and see, if thy faith is strong enough to obey. But this was not all. The patriarch was to go into the solitary wilderness where, in three days' journeyings, he would have the beloved victim before his eyes with the wood which was to consume him; and on the way, he must answer his innocent questions, which must have wrung his heart with anguish. But his fidelity triumphed through the intensity of the trial, which was, as it were, the grand climacteric at which his faith had become complete. And the Lord then said to him, "Now I know that thou fearest God, since thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

And if we would be faithful like faithful Abraham, we will not keep back our children, even those we love, when the service of God requires them from us. We shall never like him be required to kill them with our own hands, but we may not the less give them to their Maker.

But we have before us a greater example

than that of Abraham. It was doubtless one purpose of the Almighty in imposing this command on his long-tried servant, to make him sensible of his own great love in giving his son —his only son—whom he loved before the foundation of the world—that, he might die upon the cross a sacrifice for our sins. He doubtless meant these circumstances to show to the world, not only the faithfulness of the aged patriarch; but also, to give mankind some measure by which to judge of his own merciful kindness to them. And can we think of God's giving up for our sakes his own well-beloved son; and yet, be unwilling to give up any thing of ours to him? If God so loved us, we ought surely, in like manner, to love others for his sake.

But, can the love we bear to our offspring, be any thing like the love God bore to his dear son? Can a finite being do any thing to the same degree, as the infinite Jehovah? Can a creature of mixed affections love like the great Creator, who is the fountain of all love—who is love itself? And can any of our offspring be as deserving of our affection, as was the son of God, of his Almighty Father's? The feelings of a God, infinite in all his attributes, towards a perfectly pure and holy being who

stands to him in the endeared relation of a child, it must be utterly beyond our power to estimate: and we can only think of it, as something of which we cannot conceive, because it is so great as to exceed the capacities of our minds, and cannot come within the experience of our hearts.

And if his affection was so boundless, must not his mercy and loving kindness have been, in the same measure, which prompted him to yield up this much loved son as a ransom for a stubborn and rebellious race?

Can we remember how we have tried the patience of this good God; and can we think, how much long-suffering and forbearance he has shown towards us, while we were resolutely sinning against him—that even then, he did not withhold from us the good gifts of his Providence—that even then, his Spirit was striving to persuade us, not to benefit him, but to receive kindness at his hands in the free forgiveness of our sins? Can we bring to mind how long we resisted this Spirit, stubbornly refusing to accept a pardon, and that at last God's goodness triumphed over our rebellion, and as it were compelled us to receive mercy? Can we think of the wretched de-

filement of our own hearts, and that the Being who was thus trying to cleanse them, was himself all purity and hated any thing polluted by sin? And can we remember what it cost this great and merciful Jehovah, that he might show this favor to such vile sinners, such determined rebels; that, it cost him even the sacrifice of his son—his only son—whom he loved? And then, can we think there is any thing we can give up, or any thing we can do, which would be too great a return for such loving kindness, which would be too much to show our gratitude to this beneficent Being!

And when we consider that what the Father was willing should be done, the Son was ready to accomplish; that he did not hesitate to part with all for our sakes, and thought lightly of any thing he must endure in comparison to the end to be attained in our salvation, we shall surely feel, unless our hearts are dead to every noble impulse, that our own comforts are not worthy of consideration, if, by sacrificing them, we can please him; and that any labors we may undertake must be easy, since love will make them light.

We were followers of the evil one, but are

now called the sons of God. We are now living in comfort in a Christian land, and yet, but for the great atoning sacrifice, we might have been even as the darkest pagans. We were going in the way to everlasting death, but may now look forward to a happy eternity. And we can only show our gratitude for these great mercies by striving to do for others so far as we can, what Jesus has done for us. And, shall we not do it?

CHAPTER II.

A VIEW OF THE EARTH.

While Jesus was dwelling in the heaven of heavens, the first among the happy company who inhabit eternity, while he was in exalted communion with the Father, and receiving the praises of adoring angels, he was enjoying a felicity which no mortal mind can conceive, which, even the holy spirits who surround his throne cannot compass with all their bright intelligence. For he was there a being of infinite capacity for happiness in full possession of all that infinite power could command; he

was a being of entire holiness and purity, dwelling in a pure and holy place, surrounded by those who faithfully reflected his own perfections; he was love itself dwelling in the midst of love, and his blessed spirit could expand to take in its wide embrace every created thing: he could bestow an infinite love upon each, and yet, take in all.

He was thus loving and loved, blessing and beyond expression blessed, when by the word of his power, this world was brought to its proper form and peopled at his command, by a race made in his own image. He saw them holy and happy, and a place was found for them in his affections. He loved them with a perfect love: not as a parent does his child, for they are finite; but as a Creator does the being he has created; far, far, exceeding the highest earthly affection. And it was so, when he saw these objects of his kind regard, these beneficiaries of his bounty, turn in proud rebellion against him and ungratefully set his authority at defiance. To speak as we would of men, how must his heart, glowing as it did with kindness towards every creature he had made, have been wrung by the ingratitude he saw displayed in the beings, upon whom he had heaped so many favors!

The holy angels knowing what justice required, and having seen it executed on some who had fallen of their own company, must, as we may suppose, have expected to see summary wrath poured out upon the ungrateful rebels. Full of zeal for their Maker's glory, they must even have desired it. But the blessed God was pleased to see some difference between the two classes of apostates, which led him to open a way of escape for fallen man, while the fallen angels were left inheritors of the eternal despair, which the sins of both had merited. Whether it was that we were inferior in knowledge, or, because our foreparents fell through the temptation presented to their unsuspecting innocence, by the malicious fiend who wrought their ruin; or, for some other reason; (it was no doubt a good one,) but, it matters not for us to know. It is sufficient that we are informed that a way is opened, and it should draw forth our adoring gratitude and our untiring praise. And the Son; he was ready to stand in the breach and become our ransom; for his eye pitied us and he determined to stretch forth his hand to save us. Though our race was so rebellious and ungrateful, he could not give up the creatures he had loved to hopeless misery, if at

any cost, he could rescue us from the destruction we had deserved.

When he looked down upon a sinful world and saw all that its wretched inhabitants were suffering, it is no wonder that his bowels yearned with compassion for the sadness of their lot. But still, the demands of justice were inexorable: God could not violate his laws. And if he did, and if he allowed the guilty to escape, would not the whole creation think that they might rebel with impunity. When, then, no way was opened for escape but through the sufferings and death of the eternal Son, it is wonderful, wonderful passing belief, were we not certified of the fact, that he should have consented to sacrifice all, and to endure all, to save such as had despised his authority and abused his goodness.

To form even the imperfect conception we are able, of what the son of God saw when he looked down from heaven upon our race after their fall, we must remember that he could see the past, the present and the future, even from the beginning: that there were then placed before him all the sufferings, which men have endured or shall endure. And what an accumulation of misery must he have beheld! There were then open to his view the

hearts of all the generations who were to exist upon the earth; what a mass of corruption was there; no Golgotha could present so much pollution!

He saw the first born of the human race begin the career of wickedness, by the murder of his brother; and he saw him go into exile with a burden of guilt and misery too heavy to be borne; and he knew, that sin and sorrow were but then beginning. But, his purposes of mercy did not fail; he determined to make an atonement sufficient for the sin, by bearing the heavy burden of sorrow which was its due. How must the astonished hosts of heaven have wondered at the unparalleled goodness! But man, who was to receive the benefit, was unmindful of the gift, and still persisted in rebellion, though informed of the offered mercy.

He looked again, and wickedness was still increasing in the earth, as men increased upon it. But there was one family who continued faithful; though they had sinned, they were willing gratefully to accept the terms of the promised pardon: they were numbered among his chosen, and were called the sons of God. But the tempter envied them their happiness; and he sought a bait to allure them from their

duty. And he found one—one which, from that time, he has freely used to make the sons and daughters of Adam unfaithful to their Maker—a temptation by means of which, he has found it easy to smother the springing germ of religion in the heart—by which, he has succeeded in making bitter, the days of many a believer whose eternal destruction he could not accomplish; and by which, he has been able to lay snares for the offspring, when he could not secure the soul of the parent.

We are told that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of whom they chose. And when children were born to them, we are informed of the immediate consequence. God saw the iniquity of man that it was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil continually. And God repented him that he had made man; nevertheless, for his elect's sake, and for the sake of his dear Son who had undertaken their redemption, he bore with their rebellion still. And though, even the family who had been called by his name, had now gone astray, so that scarce one continued faithful, yet did the Divine Redeemer hold on to his purposes of mercy, and he still sent his Spirit to strive with

the stubborn sinners who were ever inventing new devices,and who, as one generation followed another, were getting deeper and deeper in the bonds of sin.

Then God looked again upon the earth and saw that it was corrupt; for *all* flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. It was now necessary for the good of the fallen race themselves, that the present generation should be destroyed as an example and a warning, to those who were to follow. But, among the rebellious there was one faithful found; and he was selected to continue the species upon the earth. And when, for an hundred years, he had preached repentance in vain, he entered his ark of safety, and the flood came upon the myriads of wicked who had refused to listen to his voice. Ah, how were the portals of the grave on that day thronged! and what a rush of condemned spirits was there then through the widely opened mouth of the bottomless pit! Such were the horrors of that flood, that the tradition has been handed down for thousands of years even among the most barbarous nations; and for an eternity to come, that day will not be forgotten by any of the many millions, who then were overwhelmed by the sudden rise of waters, and soon found, that they

had exchanged that flood, for the lake of liquid flames where they must be tormented forever.

But now, this man, who has been so distinguished from the rest of his race by being preserved with those who were dearest to him when the others were cut off, surely he will sin no more after such great mercy shown him. Ah, how has the patience and long suffering of the Saviour been tried by even the best of his servants! Almost the only thing we read of this individual who had had so great mercy shown him, consists of his abusing God's bounty, and being in a state of drunkenness, exposed to the derision of his own offspring. Here, indeed, do we see the great love of the Saviour that he should persist in doing us good, when even those who are enlisted under his banners, are thus continually trying his patience by fresh acts of sin, forgetful of what it cost him to open a fountain to cleanse the pollution from our souls—forgetful of past favors and of future hopes, when, an unbridled appetite gains the ascendancy in our hearts. Surely, it should excite our gratitude, that, notwithstanding this perverseness which he foresaw, he should still have been willing to descend from his high dwelling-place in the heavens, to save such unstable creatures from merited destruction.

He still retained his love and left the door of mercy open to all who would enter at his free invitation. But how few were willing to accept the terms! Before those had passed away who had been saved in the ark, mankind, who had greatly multiplied upon the earth, had so combined and encouraged one another in their wickedness, that God was again obliged to visit them; and to save them from the great excess of sin into which they were falling, he confounded their language and scattered them abroad on the face of the earth. And the further they went the more did they rebel, till scarce a vestige of Godliness was to be found upon the earth; yet was the long-suffering Saviour still holding forth offers of pardon, still striving by his Holy Spirit with sinners to persuade them to accept it.

And if we go through the history of the Old Testament and of the New, we shall throughout find displayed on the one side, forbearing mercy; and on the other, we shall see stubborn rebellion and a fixed determination to sin. We see that all are sinners; the bulk of mankind recklessly and heedlessly giving themselves up to transgress God's laws; and the few still transgressing, but mitigating their Creator's wrath by humble penitence and

securing his favor, by a grateful acceptance of his free offers of mercy.

And when we look into profane history, ancient or modern, we find it little else but a chronological table of the sins of the human race. And so it is going on, with fresh additions daily increasing the black catalogue; and so it will go on, till the whole race is, by God's Spirit, regenerated and renewed to holiness. Now, we must remember, that Jesus could see all this from the beginning, and much more than we can possibly see or know; for, there has not been one sin recorded, for the many millions which have been committed. We must remember that each one of these sins, is an act of rebellion against his Father, and a direct injury to himself; and then let us ask ourselves if he is not indeed a very merciful Saviour, who was willing to do so much as he has done, that he may forgive those who have been so stubborn and ungrateful!

Were we to select among the most debased and vicious of mankind, the one whom disease and filth has made the most revolting to our senses, he would present to us a less loathsome spectacle, than does the heart of every sinner to a pure and holy being like the blessed Saviour of the world. And yet, would he not

allow his disgust to prevent his sacrificing himself, to save from the horrid punishment which was their due, such guilty, unthankful, and polluted wretches; for, his tender heart pitied our fallen state; for, he saw the degradation of our sins; and he saw too, their attendant miseries.

If we look back again into the history of the world, we shall see sin every where accompanied by its faithful companion pain, which is at once its natural consequence and its deserved punishment. Who can estimate the amount that has been endured in all the ages of the world, and all that mankind have yet to suffer: but this Jesus saw from the first—saw not only all that has or will be, but likewise, all that would have been but for the mitigating influence of the Gospel of peace.

No sooner had Adam sinned, than he was cast in sorrow from the paradise which God had planted for his enjoyment; and from that time, has affliction been the lot of his transgressing offspring. Of his two first born, the one fell by hands of his brother; and the other went off into exile with a load of anguish crushing his spirit to the earth. This is the first private murder, but when the sons of

God had wickedly joined themselves to the daughters of evil men, the unnatural mixture produced a race who began to make killing their trade. Their progeny were the first of whom we hear, who, to appear great in the eyes of their fellow mortals, sought the destruction of their own species. These, we are told, were men of renown; that is, men, who to obtain praise, could imbrue their hands in the blood of others. We are told their character in a few words; but we are not told of the sighs and groans which were its consequence; we are not told of lifeless bodies and mangled limbs; we have not recounted to us the tears of the widow, nor, of bereaved, heart-broken parents, nor, of destitute orphans. We hear not of the desolated homes, nor of hopeless captivity, nor of the thousand ills which we know follow in the train of war. But we are simply informed that they were men of renown: and we may picture to ourselves the untold horrors which attended their ambition, but which, it would have taken many volumes to recount. But Jesus saw them all at a glance, and it is no wonder that his eyes pitied the poor sinful sufferers. He not only saw these, but he saw all the pains that have fol-

lowed in the path of conquerors ever since, of some of whom we have never heard, and of the others, we have but the like meagre detail of the warrior's reward of fame, while the attendant commentary of wide spread destruction and misery, is wholly passed over and forgotten.

But this is but one of the hydra heads of sin which with their sure concomitants of wo have made desolate the earth. I have mentioned before Noah's beastly degradation immediately following the distinguishing mercies which he had experienced. We know but too well that this vice has continued also, and has increased, upon his posterity; but we cannot know one in ten millions of the sins to which it has led. We know that it has caused wide spread unhappiness and intense suffering; but, we cannot conceive the extent of accumulated misery which has flown from it. But Jesus knows it all, and knew it all from the beginning—he knew then the disgusting nature of the vice—knew the degrading misery to which it would lead, and he knew that to cleanse from this polluting sin among others, he was to die; and that it was to relieve such debased sinners from their burden of wo, that he was

to suffer. And yet, was he willing to endure the cross, despising the shame of bearing the penalty of even such degrading guilt.

It would be an endless work to enumerate the heads even of those sins, with which we are acquainted: much less can we think to number those which our Saviour saw when he undertook our redemption. Almost every page of holy writ unfolds to us some new crime against the Almighty, and points to its certain consequences; every account of the ancient or modern, of the Pagan or the Christian world, holds up to our view a similar catalogue of sins and of sufferings. In the commandments given to Moses, we have enumerated ten principal sins; and these are but the leaders of their several classes, a few among an immense, a countless multitude. And each class branches out into innumerable ramifications in vice and crime; and each of these last is accompanied by its own peculiar form of misery which follows it in all its course, and to which, as true as the needle to the pole, it never fails to point the way.

What mortal mind can conceive of such a mighty mass of guilt, or take in the wide spread, accumulated, wretchedness which must

flow from such a polluted source! And when it is considered, that, according to the decree of the Almighty, the sin could not be pardoned till the full penalty had been borne; and that it could only be borne by a perfectly innocent being, so as to give satisfaction to the claims of justice which God could not forego, does it not exhibit to us a most divine love that the blessed Saviour should be willing to take upon himself the whole burden of our sorrows. And it was not as a man who undertakes an enterprize, uncertain of the extent of the pain or of the labors he must take upon himself. But he saw and could appreciate to the minutest degree, all the sacrifices he must make, all the sufferings he must bear, and all the toil he must endure, in order to accomplish the great work he had undertaken.

We have, however, but a contracted view of the mighty burden our Saviour was willing to bear for us, when we have only considered the temporal evils which sin has entailed upon our race: this was indeed but a light load compared with the weight our transgressions had laid upon us, and which he foresaw he must carry in our stead, if he would save our souls from worse than temporal misery. Had

it been only that, though he might pity our sufferings, he probably would not have thought it worth while for an infinite being like himself, to leave his high and holy dwelling place, and abase himself before his whole creation for our deliverance. But, it was the death, the real, everlasting death in hell, of which our wretched lot upon earth was but a feeble representation, and to which he saw we were doomed, that stirred up his compassion, and made him do what he has done for us. From the first, after a short space, we shall be delivered like the beasts that perish: but from the last, who shall deliver those who are condemned to it! And to this were we all going by the immutable decree of our offended God, when our Gracious Saviour made himself our ransom.

Now, if we think that he came in the strength of his Divine power to bear the weight of our transgressions, we take a very imperfect view of the case. None but a being of infinite purity could, like him, contend with the powers of darkness: but except in his unspotted holiness, he came to the contest in all the weakness of our mortal nature. And in this, he gained the victory in spite of all the allurements of the

world, to which the flesh he had assumed made him subject, and which, his peculiar circumstances and the circumstances of his times and of the country where he lived, presented with a power of almost irresistible temptation. In him was found no sin; yet, was his mortal frame worn down by the sins of others; in his life, and in his death, he was eminently the man of sorrows. To him justly belonged the light of the most exalted blessedness and the power of resistless strength. And yet, he came in the weakness of human flesh worn down by suffering, and with a spirit darkened by the withdrawal of the Divine presence, to a fierce and bitter contest with the great enemy of our souls. And thanks be to God, he came off conqueror. Can we look at our merciful Redeemer, and consider, how pure and spotless was his nature, and then think of his leaving for our sakes his holy habitation in the Heavens, the immediate presence of his Divine Father, the company of the loving and adoring angels: and then, having taken upon himself a form of weakness, can we see him meeting in the dreadful conflict the fierce and malignant spirits made fearfully raging by their own torments in the bottomless pit; can we see this and say, that there can be any thing we

can do in return, which would involve so much sacrifice, or suffering, or labor, that we should be unwilling to do it for his sake who has done so much for us, when we consider too, that this is the only way in which we can show our gratitude.

If the heart of Jesus was melted with pity for the miseries of our fallen race, should not those, whose hearts have been softened by the influence of his Gospel and been moulded in a measure to the resemblance of his, should not they be touched with compassion for the wretched lot of their impenitent fellow creatures! As he looked down from his dwelling place in Heaven, to take a view of fallen humanity through coming ages of sin and suffering; so may we, in the information now within our reach, look forth from our favored homes upon the more darkened abodes of vice, and upon the habitations of cruelty where sin is still triumphant, and where its consequences are bearing down its wretched victims with unmitigated oppression. We may obtain some idea of the woes endured by the present generation, and form some estimate of those which will follow, unless they shall be checked by removing in a measure the cause from which

they proceed. In view of the heart-rending spectacle presented to his sight, our Saviour was impelled by his benevolent spirit to set about doing something for our redemption: and if we are indeed his disciples, will not our pity in like manner, be stirred up and urge us on to do what we can in the same holy enterprize!

Let us cast our eyes around our own land and see if there is not indeed abundant motive for our efforts. See, with what long and hasty strides sin is stalking about through the whole extent of our borders, marching, and remarching, through the length and the breadth of the whole country. And wherever the tyrant sets his foot, there does he leave the marks of his desolating progress.

One of the first crimes committed by man, of which we have the record, was murder; and our own records tells us that it is repeated two hundred times every year within our limits. And yet, we call ourselves a peaceful people, and compared with the other nations of the earth we are so. Now think, of two hundred human beings drawing their last agonized breath under the murderous hand of a fellow mortal; and then, of the two hundred wretch

ed souls rushing through the wide gates of the bottomless pit: for it is seldom any but the ungodly, who are thus made the victims of their fellow's rage. And when the executioner has done his office, two hundred more are made to die a death of violence, and are hurried off to the same regions of despair. And then, if we consider that the murderers and the murdered, have parents and children, and wives and various other connections and friends to be made unhappy by their dreadful end, we shall find that the consequences of this sin alone, are sufficient to make wretched in each successive year, thousands who dwell within our borders. And yet, in comparison with those which follow the numerous host by which we are overrun, they are but trifling. And will not the Christian put forth his hand to stay the mighty flood which desolates our land?

And we have dwelling among us, men of renown too, who are thirsting for more fame, are ready to dip their hands in the blood of their fellows to gain the bubble honor. And there are men calling themselves men of peace, who, are willing to give to such their praise to stimulate them in the exercise of their savage trade, and who talk loud of national honor,

as if a sounding word could compensate a country for the outpouring of sin which is sure to follow in the train of war. And it is but too probable the scourge will be brought upon us; and then, shall we see the murders increased an hundred fold with an hundred fold of miseries to attend them. And can the Christian, knowing that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is sufficient to change this thirst for carnage into a spirit of peace, can he, calling himself the disciple of the meek, gentle, forbearing Saviour, neglect to use all his advantages in extending the principles of good will and brotherly love among his fellow citizens and fellow countrymen!

The third of the sins I have before mentioned as entailing pains and sufferings upon mankind, was drunkenness; and, what a wide spread desolation has this brought upon the length and the breadth of our whole land! The two former outbreakings of depravity never have, and never can, produce a tithe of the misery which this scourging sin has brought, and is bringing upon us. And there is nothing which can stay its ravages, but a sound morality firmly based upon religious principle. The Christian is then called upon, loudly

called upon, by the degradation of those who have fallen into this vice, by the sufferings of the innocent victims of their brutality, and above all, by eternal miseries to which it is reducing so many millions of souls is he called upon, to have pity upon these dying sinners, and to provide for them, so far as he has the ability, that only sure and safe remedy for every evil, contained in the word of God. He is called upon to lead as many as he can, to the great Physician who alone has the power effectually to apply it.

But to attempt to follow out all the forms of sin or of suffering, which debase and make wretched the inhabitants even of a Christian land, would be an endless task. Ours is blessed with civil rights and religious freedom, it is more than any other, a land of peace and plenty, it is cheered by the bright shining of the Gospel; and yet, how many scenes of heart-rending wo does it every where present, and all these are the bitter consequences of sin. Some other countries are in a greater or less degree blessed in the same way, but none can we find free from a like guilt, nor, from its never failing results. These present the best samples of virtue and of happiness to be found

among mankind; but enough on the other side, to make an angel weep. But there is sufficient power in the Gospel to remove the sin, to take away the unhappiness and to plant peace in its room: and upon those who name themselves by the name of Christ does it depend, whether, it shall be allowed to effect this mighty change. And if with the name, they have taken any portion of the spirit of their Saviour, their country will not call to them in vain; and when they shall awaken to the full sense of their obligation, it will be blest indeed.

And if our own nation so much more favored than others claims our compassion; how much rather, those, where depravity has its dominion without any of the countervailing influences, which, with us, check and mitigate its sway. The world calls to us for pity and our own country claims it of us, which will be so much the more blest when others, made happy by the Gospel, shall reflect a tide of happiness to our shores.

The name of Christ is spread far upon the surface of earth, but in most places, what is it more than a mockery? When we leave the Protestant nations, we leave all that bears any vestige of spirituality behind us; we find much

superstition and wide extended infidelity, but scarce any thing of religion, which deserves the name.

Let us go into France, infidel France, as it has been called. It has been rightly named. There antichrist under the form of unbelief claims the rule, and, walks with a bold front through the land, passing its blight upon individual and social happiness. But in the capital, is the chief seat of its empire: there, if we go through the dark and dirty by-ways of that great city, we shall find it stamping with frivolity and vice the sons of penury, whose half paid toil will scarce provide for the cravings of nature. And yet, are its earnings squandered regardless of those calls: and the thousands of children who are weekly carried to an untimely grave, show that its work of misery is made complete. And amidst the splendor and luxury of high life as well as in the squalid abodes of poverty, it still holds undisputed sway, marking its subjects with the same lightness and depravity; but it is qualified with elegance of taste and refinement of manners, still however, doing its business by marring the happiness of all who come under its influence. Here the outside is fair and al-

luring, but it is not the less the case that the heart is corrupt as a charnel house within.

It is like the immense cave beneath the city, where we may see the show of regular structures; but they are made of skulls tastefully arranged, and within, are but a confused heap of dead men's bones. We may walk for miles in this Golgotha, with eyeless sockets staring upon us; and in whichever way we go, we may still see skinless jaws grinning ghastly from every side. And each of these innumerable bones formed part of the structure of a living, feeling, thinking, man; and each of these structures was inhabited by an immortal soul, long since gone to render its account; some hundreds, and some, perhaps, thousands of years since.

And how very few of this countless multitude have died in the faith! Is it not a fearful thought, that each skull we find in that great charnel house, is represented by a soul in hell, which, has been enduring unutterable anguish for ages, and must continue in like torment for an eternity yet to come! Among this mass of relics, we cannot select any one, and say, whether it belonged to a prince or a beggar; to a murderer, or to the judge who condemned

him; whether it formed a part of the stately dame who trod majestically upon an embroidered carpet in the brilliant saloon, or whether it was a portion of the frame of a noisy fish woman, who, in her daily rounds ploughed her way through the mire of the streets. Here all are alike. The bones are heaped together in a confused mass, or arranged with a horrible taste into regular squares, a million of skulls in one place and ten millions of thigh bones in another, regardless of the rank of their original owners. And in like confusion, may we suppose are their souls mingled in the bottomless pit—the high and the low, the learned and the ignorant, together suffering the same pains; unless indeed the exaltation of some upon earth, affording greater opportunities to sin, has subjected them in Hell to a greater intensity of torment.

What man of reflection can go through this immense catacomb, without feeling the littleness of all human distinctions: what Christian man, can think of the many generations of sinners whose relics have been collected into this subterraneous region, and can then, go forth into the scarce less confused multitude of frivolous, dissolute, living men above ground, and can consider, that, all these are going up-

on the same broad road to Hell, that those, whose bones fill the Golgotha beneath, have traced before them—can remember, that this great city in each successive generation, yields her million of souls to crowd the dark regions of despair, and yet gives but a thirtieth part of the number given by the empire of which it is the head. What Christian can think of these things, and not have his heart wrung with pity in consideration of the mass of misery which they present to his view ?

And yet France is happier and more blest, I will not say than most heathen, but, than most which are called Christian countries ; than any perhaps, where the religion has not been reformed. There is more mental culture, more skill in those arts which add to the comfort of human existence ; there are more just ideas entertained in regard to civil governments, and there is enjoyed a greater degree of civil and religious liberty within her bounds, than in any other Catholic country. Though vice and profligacy are so prevalent among her population, there are some of another stamp : and even some there are, who are sincere and devoted Christians, and whose earthly lot, is mitigated by the absence of many of the evils which their debasement brings upon the

others; and *their* future prospect, is a prospect of joy.

As it is, there is there, sin and misery enough to call forth the pity and the sympathy of every Christian heart, and to stir it up to labor for their deliverance. But let us cross the Pyrrennees, and we enter a new field of wretchedness. We are now in the domains of the Papal antichrist, where the mother of abominations bears the sway: and truly, is her rule despotic. By her baneful influence the minds of men are here sunk to the most degrading superstition; and the lower classes, are kept in abject poverty by ignorance and oppression. Here the priest-ridden multitude, are made to give of their penury to purchase absolution from a mortal whom they are taught to believe, can forgive them their sins; and the wealthy Hidalgo, contributes freely of his wealth to secure a safe indulgence in vice and crime, from the same assumed authority. Here may a poor deluded being be found at one time praying to his wooden saint for success in his undertaking; and when he does not succeed, he may be seen scourging his idol and upbraiding the senseless thing with his ill-luck. A traveller mentions a water carrier in

Lisbon, who refused a glass of wine because, as he said, he was too good a Catholic to drink it on Friday; but he offered, at the same time, to assassinate another, for a single piece of gold. And can happiness dwell where superstition reigns, and, as is natural to it, goes hand in hand with villany!

Let a Christian go through the streets of Madrid or Lisbon and see the squalid poverty, the disgusting filth, the loathsome varieties of disease, the malignity of passion, and the many odious forms of vice which will be there presented to his view; and from that, let him go to one of our New England villages where the Gospel is preached in its purity, and where true religion has established its reign, so that the love of the Saviour to a good degree pervades the hearts of the population; and let him observe the peace and quiet, the industry and comfort, the cleanliness and health, the intelligence and happiness, which will there prevail; and then let him remember, as is doubtless the case, that the prevalence of a pure Gospel makes all the difference, and that one place may be made like the other, when this word of truth shall there extend its reign. And is it not worth the Christian's while, to make sacrifices and to endure pains and labor,

if, thereby, he can help to elevate any portion of mankind who are thus degraded, if he can make happy those who are living in such vileness and wretchedness; who, notwithstanding, were made to feel as he feels, as sensitive to pain and as capable of enjoyment; who have hearts which may be made to take delight in praising their Maker, though they are now debased by the vile bondage of superstition. The Spirit of Jesus which claims dominion in the believer's soul, which it has modelled, in a measure, to the image of his Divine Master, will incline him to attend the calls of mercy from whatever quarter the cry of misery may come—will impel him to afford relief wherever his power extends. And if the object of his pity is vicious, he will not, therefore, despise him; because, he will remember that he, too, was once vile, and, but for his Saviour's love, would have been so still. God did not refuse him mercy, because of his pollution; and he will not deny his pity to any, however sinful they may be. It needs but to show him an object of misery to call forth his compassion; and to secure his ready help, it will be only necessary to point out to him the way to administer relief.

It is not however in those places where the Papal Abomination has its seat, that we must look for the greatest vileness or the greatest misery. Enough indeed is there, of both, to excite the disgust and to call forth the pity of the Christian heart. The Saviour's spirit does not pervade any part, neither, is he there honored by his professed worshippers; but, his own creatures are adored in his room. And yet, it would seem, as if his ever blessed name by which they are called, had the power to keep from them the unmitigated horrors which oppress those lands, in which it is not known.

If we go a little farther south we are on the continent of Africa, a land of which we know but little, because but few have returned who have penetrated beyond the coast. Nay, most who have but landed, or, even entered her harbors, have there left all that was mortal about them. But what we do know, shows us that it is the seat of such horrors as could he but realize them, would almost curdle the blood in the Christian's heart. The dark skins of her sons do but cover the darker ignorance of their minds; and the fetters by which the limbs of so many are manacled, do but represent the more debasing bondage of their souls. Galling oppression with the most degrading

superstition go hand in hand, to fill up to them the full measure of earthly wo. And let Christians, of whatever nation they may be, remember, how much the cupidity of their own countrymen, perhaps of their own ancestors, has helped to rivet upon these the chains of slavery and to excite them to acts of cruelty towards each other. Christians should feel that Africa and every other land which has suffered wrong by the contaminating influence of those called by the same name as themselves, have upon them a double claim, the claim of justice as well as of mercy. The blessed Saviour was bound by no such obligation to do us good: he owed us nothing, no justice was due from him towards us, except indeed, what called for our punishment. The only tie upon his mercy, was our sin and our misery; but these were all sufficient to make him give up every thing for our sakes. And shall not our increased obligations, justice for the wrongs we have done, compassion for the degradation and sympathy for the distress of the poor heathen, when added to the requirements of gratitude for the mercies we have ourselves received, make us eager to do something for the relief of those who are yet in darkness and the shadow of death, who are going down daily by tens of thousands to taste its realities!

When Major Denham was passing through a desert of Africa, he had fallen one day into reflections which had withdrawn his mind from the scene before him, when he was startled by the stumbling of his horse. He looked down and a chill ran through his veins when he observed that the animal had blundered upon a human scull, which he had crushed beneath his foot. All around was a dreary desert of blowing sands; and occasionally, would he come upon the half-buried skeleton of a human being who had probably fallen from weariness, or overcome by thirst, and unable to rise, had there remained till his bones were bleached and dried in the burning wind of the desert. And sometimes, the remains of a whole caravan would be seen, who had all perished together.

How well, did that prospect represent the wilderness of this world, a weary waste with marks of death every where around. The blasting wind of the desert is far less baleful in its effects, than is the simoom of sin which has made desolate the earth. In that dreary waste, may be often heard the wild wail of the captive, who has been torn from friends and country, to be dragged into hopeless slavery. And every where, may be heard the bitter cry

of Satan's victims who are condemned to a more dreadful bondage. Far above the burning sands of Africa, so far as to be invisible to the human eye, hovers the vulture of the desert, watching with his keen glance for his prey; and no sooner does the weary traveller stumble and fall, than he begins to descend. With the speed of lightning, he pounces upon the poor wretch, and while the breath is in his nostrils and the blood still circulates in his veins, begins to tear the living flesh from his bones: and above us, though we see him not, hangs a spirit more foul than the carrion bird; and when a poor mortal stumbles in this wilderness, he is ready to seize him for a prize.

And there are those passing through this scene of desolation, who have the eye of faith fixed on the distant prospect of a far better land, a happy, heavenly country. And can they see their fellow travellers roaming at large in the desert, where, in doing so they must finally perish, and not endeavor to turn their feet into the right path which leads to their own expected blissful inheritance. They have a faithful guide pointing to them the way, and asking in return, that they would draw into it, any poor wanderers they may meet upon their journey: and shall they accept the kindness

at his hands, and refuse to fulfil his wishes? Though the parched desert may deny its water springs, they are supplied from a never-failing fountain: there is enough and to spare; and they are invited to drink freely themselves, and to distribute the refreshing waters to every way-worn traveller they can find: and shall they be ever renewing their own strength at the healing stream, and withhold its bounties from the fainting souls around? They know that the fierce vulture is watching for his prey, and will they not warn their heedless companions that they may seek refuge under the same Almighty wing, which covers and protects themselves?

Christians do not realize the utter debasement which marks the mass of mankind; they cannot conceive of the wanton cruelty which superstition and their own vile passions lead them to exercise upon each other; they do not properly estimate the unhappy lot, to which, most of their fellow creatures upon the earth are subjected; and they do not sufficiently appreciate the power of the Gospel to remove the ills which man is heir to in this world, or they would use every effort, and after the example of their Saviour, be ready to make sacrifices, and to endure suffering, if, by any

means, they might be made the instruments of mitigating the condition of wretched humanity. They cannot realize the fearful doom which awaits the wicked in another state of existence; nor can their minds take in the numbers used to compute the millions, who in each generation, are going down to make proof of the certain horrors which await them, or they would wish to bring every power into action, that thereby they might save some, from an eternity of torment.

If the Christian could once see acted in its reality a scene such as I once read of, and which, I have no doubt was intended to be a just description of such superstitious rites, as are of frequent recurrence upon the coast of Africa, he might form a more just estimate of the state of the heathen world. A gallows was erected, and under the cross beam was built a blazing fire, over which, suspended by one arm, was hung the living body of a woman. And she was to be sacrificed to the bloody minded devil these deluded savages worshipped for their god. A wild, wailing, shriek was heard, as the officiating priest carefully cut away at the thigh joint one of her lower limbs, which he dropped into the fire. Another, and another

bitter cry, followed as first the other leg, and then, an arm, were in like manner amputated and thrown into the blaze. At last the arm by which she was suspended, was cut away; and the trunk divested of all its limbs, but, still living and breathing, fell to be consumed with its mangled members. We know that scenes of like atrocity, are exhibited continually, not only there, but, in every heathen land: we are as sure of it, as if we saw them acted before our eyes. Why then, do we not make greater efforts to save the wretched victims from such a fearful fate, and their deluded oppressors, from the more dreadful guilt which they are bringing upon their own souls.

What a horrible death must be his, or hers, who is made a sacrifice to a bloody demon.—And yet we know that the flames in which they are consumed, are not the most appalling part of their fate. That they form but a fiery passage to the still more intense, but, unconsuming flames of the bottomless pit. And we know, that millions are yearly descending to this pit. And Christians will not put forth their hands to stay them; or they do it so coldly, that but very little is effected compared with what should be done. And why is it so? Because they prefer their ease and are unwilling

to sacrifice any portion of their comfort, from love to the souls of their fellow men. It is even to be feared, that they allow the indulgence in luxuries which injure their health, or, the pampering of their pride, or the gratification of their avarice which are ruinous to the soul, to hold a place in their estimation above the desire to serve their Maker. They would be willing to do this last, if they could do it cheaply; but, they cannot sacrifice on the Saviour's altar of love any of their darling passions. Such may call themselves Christians, but they cannot be so; for in them dwells not the spirit of Jesus.

Now, reader, will not you consider, whether you are thus making a mock of God by a hollow profession, while your heart is given to serve the lusts which are most hateful in his eyes! If you cannot make some sacrifice to relieve your impenitent fellow men from the bondage of sin which presses so heavily upon them, call not yourself a servant of him who so pitied a wretched world, that he gave his only begotten son to die for their deliverance. If your heart does not mourn over the wo which sin has entailed upon mankind; and if, it does not long to do something for their rescue, do not say you are a disciple of the compassion-

ate Saviour, who was content to give up all that it was possible to possess, to do all that could be done, and to suffer all that could be endured, that he might open a way of escape for those, from whose pollution his holy nature must have revolted in disgust. If it is indeed so with you, my reader, I do not call upon you to pity the degraded heathen; but, have compassion on your own soul. You are yet in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity! You are going on with the advantages you possess towards a greater condemnation, a more agonizing eternity, than can await any heathen.

CHAPTER III.

CHRIST'S RESIDENCE IN THE WORLD.

Having before taken an imperfect view of our Saviour's sacrifices, let us now endeavor to form some estimate of what he endured for our sakes. Of the stripes and buffeting, the spitting, the revelings, the mockings he bore, of his fainting under the cross, his long protracted dying upon it, and of his bitter agony in the

anticipation, of these we can form some estimate, for, our bodies are all sensible to pain, our spirits can feel indignities and our hearts ingratitude. Many have known the helpless misery of failing strength, the bitterness of suffering when exposed to scorn, and the dreadful expectations of unavoidable evils. But, if any individual could prove them all, he would not know the whole, nor even the chief of the sorrows, that were placed upon the blessed Jesus that he might bear them in our stead.

Until we know as he knew the malignity of the foul spirits of the air; until like him, we are tempted to that which our souls the most abhor, while the peculiarities of our situation put it in its most alluring form, while the weakness of mortal nature inclines us to catch at the enticing bait, and while the arch fiend, perhaps in the shape of an angel of light, helps to give it strength by his wily suggestions, drawing his reasons even from the word of God: until we have thus been tried, when the flesh, reduced to the last extremity of mortal weakness can give no support to the harassed spirit, but only disposes it to yield, we can never know the bitterness of that conflict which Jesus endured for us. And who but the Holy

One could have been thus proved, and have come off conqueror!

None but a spirit, pure like his, can feel the blessedness of the light of God's countenance shining upon a heart undefiled by sin. And until that is felt, noone can estimate the horror of the darkness which must follow the withdrawal of that light. And when we consider that in the hour of his greatest trial this was withheld from him, even when his body was reduced to the last extremity of exhaustion by bearing for us the heavy load of our guilt which caused him such anguish, as to wring from him great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane; and when we remember that in this enfeebled state and without the support of his Father's presence, he was called to suffer the shame and anguish of an ignominious death; and that, in that last hour of agony the fell spirits from the bottomless pit were letting loose upon him all their malignity, wreaking their vengeance upon his feebleness; that he was obliged to enter the fierce contest alone that he might conquer death for us; and when we consider, that in this gloomy and harassed condition he was made to pass through the dark valley, we must perceive that

the trials our Saviour endured in the flesh were such, as it can fall to the lot of no common mortal to endure. And for us, he bore them all and came off conqueror; for us, he triumphed over death and the grave, that we might triumph over sin. And can we remember it, and not have our hearts swell with gratitude for his great goodness?

But we have not yet touched upon the chief cause of our Saviour's sorrows. It was not the pains of the flesh, nor the weakness of the mortal nature he had assumed, nor the temptations to which this exposed him; it was not his passing under the dominion of death, nor his agony upon the cross, nor his bitter conflict with the spirits of disobedience. Over all these he knew he should triumph, for he came in the power of his mighty love to work redemption for us; and under all, was he supported by the expectation of a sure recompense of reward. All these must have been as nothing to so holy a Being, when compared to the disgust his pure and benevolent spirit must have felt in coming in contact with the pollution of sin, and seeing its bitter consequences. Every moment must his affectionate heart have been made to suffer by the misery which he witnessed: continually, must his faithful spirit

have been grieved by the unceasing acts of rebellion against his Father, which could not but give him pain.

He must have been constantly shocked by the impurity in the midst of which he dwelt, and by the malignant and perverse passions with which he was surrounded. Let us remember the spotlessness of his own character and the gentleness of his nature: let us remember too, that he could read every heart, and that all its pollution was laid open before him. And we should consider also, the peculiar wickedness and hypocrisy of the generation with whom he lived upon earth; let us contrast their vileness with his purity of soul, and then say, can you suppose that there is any loathing or disgust that we can feel, which will bear a comparison with the abhorrence which he felt in taking up his abode amidst so much vileness! And if he could and now can see the thoughts of every mind, and if all pollution of sin, impurity of heart, or malignity or hypocrisy of spirit is so hateful to him, how careful should we be to purge our souls from every uncleanness, that we may make them an acceptable offering in his sight? And moreover, if he for our sakes was content to bear with that which his holy nature detested, can

any be so vile that we will not overcome our repugnance, if thereby we can do them good ?

We can estimate the self devotion of a Howard ; for we may, any of us, undertake like enterprises and make similar sacrifices to relieve the temporal or spiritual wants of our fellow-creatures. For this, it is only necessary that we should have the disposition. But our Saviour's sufferings and our Saviour's sacrifices, we cannot estimate ; for, they were not those of a mere man. But we may prize them, and to the extent of our finite capacities, we may appreciate them. If a man of cultivated mind, refined taste, cleanly in his habits, and of virtuous feelings, takes up his abode in the dwellings of abject poverty amidst filth, and vice, and obscurity, that he may nurse the diseased and degraded inmates ; if he persevere in spite of ingratitude, accompanied by continual reproaches and abuse, and if in addition to this, he has left a pleasant home and kind friends and placed himself beyond the reach of any kindred spirit, we very rightly admire his disinterested benevolence.

Nothing which this world presents to our view, makes a nearer approach to our Saviour's love. A father's affection for his child may be pure, but it is not so disinterested as this.

The claims of nature are strong upon a parent's heart: our only claim upon our Saviour's love, was our guilt and misery. If we would be like him, as all must be who are saved by him, we must sympathize in the distress and feel pity for the debasement of others: and we shall allow these to make an irresistible demand upon us for relief.

With what surprise must the pure spirits of heaven have heard, that the Son of God had consented to bear our sins by suffering their penalty in our place: that he would make a full atonement by which a free pardon might be offered to all, and that to do this, it would be necessary for him to take our nature upon him, to associate with us on earth, living in sorrow and contempt, and at length dying a painful and ignominious death! Their own minds would have revolted at coming in contact with aught that was sinful: how must their wonder have been excited then, when told that the fountain and source of all purity, of whose holiness theirs was but the reflected image, had consented to dwell in the very midst of sin!

With what intense interest would they watch his progress upon the earth, sympathizing in his

sufferings, rejoicing in his success, and burning with holy indignation against those who reviled and persecuted him—considering it their greatest privilege when allowed to administer support to his overburdened frame, or to carry comfort to his agonized spirit—or, when set to watch over, guide, and protect the elect whom his blood had cleansed from the pollution of their sins, and whom his sufferings and death had saved from the wrath which their guilt deserved.

And when, his work accomplished, he returned to make heaven more joyful by his presence, with what transports would they welcome his arrival, and with what delight would they bear aloft the souls of his redeemed! One at least was with him then, to partake his triumph, and to add to it: the repentant thief whom his Lord upon the cross had promised to meet in paradise, was there—a sanctified, glorified spirit, borne up on angel wings to witness the day of rejoicing in the skies, to join with wondering gratitude in the loud hallelujahs of heaven.

What a change from his groans upon the cross to the triumphant songs in the presence of God, from the agony of mangled limbs to the joys of paradise! And what a change too,

from the hardened culprit to the glorified saint! If such are the effects of the glad tidings of reconciliation, it is not strange the angels should desire to search out the wonders of redeeming love! With what surprise must the transformed malefactor have viewed this change in himself! With what astonishment did he find himself hailed by the bright spirits of heaven, as their brother, purchased to them by the sufferings of their dear elder brother and Lord! Admitted to the presence of his Lord's Father, now his own reconciled Father through the all-sufficient atonement, he may bask in the smiles of his God and his Saviour, and need never fear a change.

And if the Gospel has the power to effect such wonders, should we not earnestly desire to apply its transforming influences to the hearts of the many poor outcasts who are sunk in vice and wretchedness; but who, may by it be made happy and holy, who may become sons of God redeemed into his family by the blood of his Eternal Son; who may be admitted to the brotherhood of angels and archangels to call forth their songs of praise and to join in them!

And we, as many as believe in the same Saviour, shall be received with like joy into

the same happy company with whom the ransomed thief has his portion: and we may there enjoy the same smiles and feast upon the same love, the same unchanging love forever. And when we shall thus appear in the presence of the Redeemer and of his redeemed, do we not desire to go prepared to make the most acceptable offering we can carry. Would we not wish to show some souls saved by our means, some who have been led by us to the same fountain, in which we have sought cleansing for ourselves! But, if we would go to paradise attended by those who have been sanctified and glorified through our intervention—if we would wish to tune afresh the harps of heaven, and provide a new theme of praise to its hosts of happy spirits, we must watch for, and improve every opportunity circumstances may place in our power to bestow the glad tidings of salvation on those who are near, and to send it to those afar off. Then, as Jesus returned to the heavens with the souls of those he had ransomed to add to his glory, so may we hope there to appear, with a company saved by our help through his blood, to increase our crown of joy. And who can tell the multitude, any one of us, after a life spent like the sojourn of the Saviour upon earth in

doing good, may be able to present before the throne of God at the last day clothed in the wedding garments of salvation—souls, who have been gathered by our instrumentality from our own country, and from every kindred, and tongue, and nation. With what gladness shall we then look at them ranged upon the right hand of their Saviour; how shall we rejoice to count their number and say, "Here am I, Lord, and the children thou hast given me."

A worldly-minded man thinks it strange that any one having the choice of a station upon earth, should select one that was lowly in preference to a condition of grandeur. Jesus would doubtless have chosen the latter had his object been to gratify his avarice, or his pride, or to indulge in sloth and luxury: but this formed no part of his mission. He came to set us an example of a holy life, of zeal and activity in the service of God, of disinterested, untiring benevolence to man. He came to show us a specimen of meekness, gentleness, and forbearance, and of sincere and faithful love: and above all, he came to suffer and to die; to bear the burden of our guilt, and to wash away its stains. And he chose his sta-

tion according to the purposes which he wished to effect; and who will say, that he did not choose it wisely? And Christians, followers of Christ, those who wish to walk in his steps, should not they be wise too; should they covet the distinctions of wealth, and rank, and power? If they would imitate his holiness, they must seek to acquire his humility; they must be meek, gentle and long-suffering; and these qualities are not gained in the pursuits of ambition: if they would be like him in his devotedness to God, they must not allow the world to clog and hamper their souls by its heavy chains: if they would follow him in his benevolence to man, they must be condescending, disinterested, active and unwearied in doing good, pitying the most vicious and profligate, and still striving with the stubborn and unthankful.

If he would do all this, the Christian must not be eager to secure the honors of this world, he must not follow after its pleasures; but he must be satisfied to continue where it has pleased God to place him. And there, he must be cautious how he allows the indulgences within his reach to betray him into lukewarmness and unfaithfulness. If God has ordered his lot in an elevated position in society, I do

not say he must follow his Saviour's example in taking a lower station; but he can follow him in walking lowly where he is, and by avoiding the eager strife so almost universal among men, to obtain a higher rank in the estimation of his brother mortals.

Jesus chose the happiest condition that was open to his choice. We all acknowledge in the abstract that neither wealth, nor honor, nor power, can increase the happiness of any individual. Even those who are most eager in seeking them, acknowledge that it is so; that these things bring much chagrin, and disquietude, and disappointment, but very little comfort even when attained; and yet, with the inconsistency of human nature, they are none the less eager in their endeavors to secure them. There is something alluring and very soothing to the pride of man in the distinctions of rank and wealth, and in the possession of power: it is seldom that even Christians attain to such a measure of true wisdom, as to hold them in merited contempt. It is not often that even they can really feel what their reason must allow to be the fact, that, after the necessaries and to a certain degree the comforts of life are at command, wealth cannot add to

their enjoyment, and that the exercise of power, so far from giving comfort, does but vex and harass the soul.

It is common in speaking of our Saviour's self-abasement, to dwell upon the lowly station he chose to occupy; but, I think it is a mistake to suppose it required a greater sacrifice to take that station, than it would to have taken one more exalted. To him, when he made his choice, all earthly distinctions must have appeared but vanity. A worldly king must have been viewed by him pretty much as a king of ants must be viewed by us; any assumption of pomp and parade in moving among his subjects would appear ludicrous, for what is the insect but an ant still, whom our foot may crush with all his majesty, if we are not careful how we step.

If a rich man were to be suddenly deprived of his wealth, he would feel the loss quite as much, whether he was left with ten dollars or only with ten cents in his pocket. But the poor peasant who had never possessed a single dollar, would feel rich in the possession of ten: and the rich man, after he had been impoverished, would be pleased to obtain a small sum which formerly he might have despised.

And to our Saviour, after he had taken upon

himself the form of a man and saw things with the eyes of his flesh, the allurements of rank and power doubtless possessed attractions, as appears by his temptations in the wilderness. He knew, as we all know, that their promises of comfort are delusive; but seeing as a man, the glitter was still enticing, though, unlike many of his followers, he spurned the gilded bait.

But when he made his choice it was not so. He was then dwelling in the bosom of the Father, and there was no false medium imposed by frail mortality, which could warp his vision. Things then appeared only as they had a moral relation to right and wrong, to sin and holiness: to him, as to all who dwelt in those happy regions, the holiest station appeared the most blest, and he chose it There was less attraction in the splendor and pomp of regal grandeur, accompanied as it almost invariably has been, by unrestrained licentiousness and pride, than there was in the abodes of humble piety, though associated with want and suffering. The mind in which was implanted the love of God with a meek and quiet spirit, was more pleasing to him than all the wisdom of the stoics, defaced as it was by dogmatism and pride. The intellectual capacities of all

must have seemed to him altogether contemptible, and the difference between the least and the greatest not worthy of notice.

If he had pleased he might have had his lot cast amidst the school of Socrates or Plato, and have excelled them all in wisdom and learning; but, he chose to associate with the poor fishermen of Galilee, and their company was doubtless more congenial to his spirit. He might have dwelt in the proud splendor of Herod's court, or, in imperial Rome he might have sat upon the throne of the Cæsars; but, what was regal pomp, thrones, and crowns, and sceptres, and purple robes, to him, who was the bright image of the Father's glory, who was sitting at the right hand of the majesty on high! What was the dominion of empires to him, who ruled the universe and could call worlds into being by the breath of his mouth; what attraction could there be in the subjection of kingdoms and provinces to him, before whom, angels and archangels bowed in humble adoration, under whom were placed all principalities and powers—to him, who did what he would in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of this lower world! The allwise, all-powerful, eternal Son of God could not look with desire upon the imperfect

wisdom of man, or upon any mortal strength, contracted, frail, and fleeting as they are. The idea seems utterly absurd.

But that perfect, holy Being, could value goodness in the meanest of his erring creatures, and could judge by a just measure, all its varying degrees. Pure and spotless himself, he must, if he dwelt among sinners, have preferred the society of those who were the least defiled by it; and accordingly, we see his lot was cast in the household of the humble and pious Joseph, and that he had the meek and lowly virgin for his mother. Can any suppose he would have dwelt happier in the palace of Tiberius, and have been better pleased to have a proud and haughty Empress call him son? Would he have found more congenial associates among the lofty senators of Rome, than with the good Zacharias and Elizabeth, or in the loving family of Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus?

And in this, has not Jesus here set us an example that we should walk in his steps? Every man may in a measure choose his own associates: and every Christian is bound to be particular in the choice he makes, and so far as he has been changed to his Saviour's image,

he will desire to follow his example in this respect. If his spirit has been sanctified like the spirit of Christ, though he can never attain to the same degree of excellence, yet, will he wish to make the nearest possible approach to it. He knows that the society any man frequents, has a most powerful tendency in modelling his own character; and he will choose to be with those who most resemble their Saviour, that he may more and more acquire his likeness. He knows that when Jesus shall appear, we shall be made like him, for we shall see him as he is; and he will be ever seeking his image in others, that he may become better prepared for the happy change.

And the man who has in any good degree experienced this transforming influence upon his heart, will feel, on coming in contact with that which is unholy, in a measure as his Saviour felt. The society of the wise of this world, the learned, the polished, or the witty, will have no charms for him when these qualities are combined with infidelity, profligacy or disregard to God; he may enjoy such of them as he finds united with love for the Saviour and zeal for the glory of God, but without this association, they will be distasteful and utterly repugnant to his feelings. And so of wealth,

and honor, and power; he will not be desirous of them for himself or for his companions; and he will, so much as he can, avoid the society of those who possess them, when, as is but too commonly the case, they are united with worldliness of spirit and a practical contempt for the great Creator. The heart assimilated to Christ, will find most enjoyment in communion with the humblest disciples, with the most sanctified spirits, though they be disconnected from all that the world esteems of value.

But if Jesus had loved holy society so as to have made it the chief object of his pursuit, then, would he have continued in heaven: there, in its perfection would he have enjoyed the company of its bright spirits in the excellence of their purity; there, might he have remained happy and blessed far above the capacity of his mortal state. But he had another purpose to effect, and to accomplish it, he must take upon him the likeness and dwell in the midst of sinful flesh. Had it been necessary, he would doubtless have taken a Herod or a Nero for his chief companions, as he did take a Judas; but it would have been a far sorer trial to his heavenly mind, than it

was to associate with the poor fishermen, Peter and John, and Nathaniel, that Israelite in whom there was no guile. When the benevolent object of his mission required it, he made a ready sacrifice of his own comforts and enjoyments; but further than that he did not see fit to bring his holy mind in contact with the pollution which he hated.

And here too, may we not place our foot upon the point in which he has trodden. The sanctified spirit of a Christian must revolt from unholy communion with the vicious or profane. He will desire to associate only with the sanctified members of Christ's spiritual Church; and it is right and proper he should feel so, and it is his duty to limit his association to such, so far as his circumstances will allow, and other claims do not interfere. This disposition is one of the best of proofs that he has part and lot in the great redemption, and by pursuing this course he is making his heart a fit residence for the Saviour's love. But as Jesus opened his ears to the cries of a perishing world, and, to redeem the sinners, was content to give up his blest abode and dwell amidst the defilements, and surrounded by the miseries of sin: so will his disciples, when they can follow his example in doing acts of

mercy, not shun contact with the vilest and most abandoned, but will cut themselves off from the Christian intercourse so justly dear to their souls, to dwell with the dark-minded Pagan or the outcast criminal, to enlighten the darkened mind with the light of the Gospel, and to bring the guilty heart for cleansing, to the all-sufficient fountain of the Saviour's blood.

Must they not then suffer in their Christian graces in leaving the brotherhood of Jesus' disciples, to go where they will have before them no example of holiness, which, has always been found so conducive to spiritual growth? No! they go forth like their Saviour: none have been harmed by walking in his steps. And they do not go away without his holy example ever before them to stimulate their love; they take their Bibles with them, and going in the love of Jesus to do as he has commanded, they will be ever looking to him as their guide, their pattern and supporter. They will not want for spiritual communion, for the Father of spirits is ever with them to sanctify their hearts and to bless their labors, undertaken in his name to the good of their own souls, as well, as to the souls of others. And like their great forerunner in the

work of mercy, they will ever keep their courage firm and hearts watchful by waging a continual warfare with the great enemy of mankind, in constant endeavors to pull down the strong holds of sin. Men thus enduring hardness as good soldiers of Christ, can never suffer in their Christian graces.

Though Jesus dwelt in the midst of sin that he might prepare salvation for the sinners, yet further than was required for the purposes of his mission, or was rendered necessary by the circumstances of his situation, he did not frequent their society. And in this, should his disciples do as he did. When they can be doing good to the souls, or, mitigating the sorrows of impenitent transgressors, they will not fear to seek out their haunts, be they never so corrupt. But, except so far as such purposes are in their hearts, they ought sedulously to avoid the peculiar resort of sinners. They should fear to enter the domains of Satan without their arms prepared for the fight and their hearts resolute for the contest, lest the prince of darkness find them benighted there, and claim them for his own: if he succeeds not in shutting up their souls in his prison-house of despair, he may throw a gloom over

their spirits by raising doubts in their heart, so as to embitter the residue of their days upon the earth; or, he may place a stumbling block in their way, which, may cause them to disgrace their Christian profession, and thus crucify afresh their long-suffering Saviour.—The gratification of curiosity, can be no excuse to the believer in Jesus, for thus jeopardizing his own soul and the honor of his Master: much less can the desire of pleasures or of honors; for those which are not to be found in the path of duty, are not for the Christian to enjoy. But when in the service of their Lord they are called to enter upon the ground occupied by the evil one, they may do it without fear; for their God can, and so long as they labor in faith and love, he will protect them.

During the Saviour's sojourn upon earth, though his was a life of sorrows, as it must have been in bearing the burden of our guilt, yet, were there many alleviations to his lot, and his residence among us was not without its enjoyments. Such relief he found as was consistent with the great object of his mission, and such gratifications, as would give pleasure to a pure and spotless being. And his follow-

ers must seek their ease only where it comports with the faithful discharge of their duty to him; and they should look for satisfaction in those things alone, in which heavenly minds can find enjoyment.

In continuing amidst the dwellings of sinful flesh, it was doubtless some alleviation to this necessity, to have the pious Mary for his mother: her kindness and the care of the faithful Joseph, could not but have been a comfort to his affectionate heart. And he had many friends, whose humble piety and sincere love must have afforded consolation amidst the perverseness of a heartless world. When his strength failed in the mighty work he had undertaken, angels were sent to support and cheer his drooping spirits: in the expectation of the trying hour which awaited him, the loving disciple lay in his bosom sympathizing in his distress, and thereby lightening the load of his grief. And when he hung in agony upon the cross, the same disciple was near to afford what comfort he could to his dying Master; there too was his faithful mother and other dear friends, still clinging to him in the day of trouble in spite of the enemies arrayed against him. And above all, except when he was hung as a sacrifice upon the cross, through every

scene of his eventful life, he had the consolation of his Father's presence to cheer, and of his approval, to bless him.

The disciple of Christ has, like his Master, kind relatives and affectionate friends to comfort him on his pilgrimage: he has commonly faithful Christian brethren on whose fidelity he may rest when the world rages around him: if he cannot see the holy angels, he knows that they continually encamp around to guard and protect all the children of the most High: it is seldom he cannot have a sincere friend in whose faithful bosom to unload his grief and receive comfort from his sympathy: and in the hour of death, such are ever around to give consolation in his dying moments, and to afford him support in his approach to the dark valley. Then too, unlike his Saviour, he may expect God's presence, as he enters the gloomy shades which overhang the entrance to eternity: and if the comfort of this is denied him, his passage will still be safe, and, like his Master, he will but step from this world of trouble and vanity, into the realities of heavenly bliss.

And Jesus had his pleasures too: and we may be sure, they were only such as were con-

sistent with a holy life. But what the world calls pleasure, riotous mirth and licentiousness, the abuse of the faculties God has given, and of the blessings he has bestowed upon man, we may be equally sure he never could enjoy. Yet we find him often sitting down to such entertainments as were given him, but we never hear of any immoderate indulgence at them. Such was the sanctity of his character and the fearlessness with which he reproved sin, that none could have dared, thus to offend before him. We see him on one occasion attending a marriage feast, and we cannot suppose that his presence tended to mar the cheerfulness of the joyful occasion: but it was not in these things, nor in any pleasures of sense, that he sought for delight.

It was when he had restored the paralytic limbs, when he had made the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak, when he had restored sight to the blind, and when he saw the lame man leap as the hart for joy at his renovated limbs, it was then, he enjoyed an holy, heavenly pleasure, such as no sensual gratification has the power to bestow. And many a joyful moment did the Saviour pass, with an innocent babe in his arms, which a mother had brought for him to bless: and those who were blessed

of *him*, were blest; and it was his delight to bless them.

The Christian may lawfully enjoy the pleas ures of society, and receive with thankfulness those good gifts which his Maker has bestowed upon him: his senses were formed to afford him satisfaction, and, it is only their inordi nate or excessive gratification which is sinful. But still, if he would follow his pattern, he must seek delight in better things than these—in visiting the fatherless and the widow in their affliction—in relieving distress under whatever form he may find it—in lightening sorrow by sympathy, and in every way seeking to do good. Like his Master, he will love little children, because they exhibit human nature in its most innocent and most attractive form; he will delight to please them and rejoice the most, when he can lead them to the Saviour for his blessing.

But of all the alleviations he experienced in his sorrowful journey through a sinful world, there was nothing which brought such relief to the wearied spirit of the overburdened Saviour, as the sight of a sinner turning from the error of his way and entering the path of life which he had opened before him. It was

then, he saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied.

There was no pleasure to him, like that caused by perceiving the tears of the broken-hearted penitent: and it was his delight to lift the crushed spirit from the earth, and to pour balm into the wounded mind. It was his joy to preach the glad tidings of salvation, and he rejoiced to send forth others with the blessed news. Such, was the relief the Saviour sought from the oppression of his care, and such were the pleasures he desired to enjoy, benevolent, disinterested, pure, and heavenly delight, such as the stranger to his spirit intermeddleth not with.

To make the comparison once more, should not the servant be satisfied to be as his Lord? Should he not consider it the greatest honor to be employed as his Master, and make it his chief delight to be admitted to the same enjoyments? If the Christian has undertaken a self-denying service in the same cause in which his Saviour labored, if like him he labors with constancy, with earnest prayer and a confiding faith, like him shall he see of the travail of his soul in turning some poor wanderers into the paths of life—like him, perhaps, he will be allowed the prospect of a future, continued,

more abundant harvest. Like his Master, shall he see with joy the penitential tears of the awakened sinner; and like him, will he delight to bind up the broken heart and give consolation to the subdued and contrite spirit. Like his Saviour, he will rejoice to hold forth to a fallen world the free offers of pardon and the promise of acceptance, and to stimulate others to carry the joyful news to those whom his own voice cannot reach.

And now, Christian, let me ask, can you seek a higher honor than to be employed in the same service with the son of God, and have you no taste for his holy, heavenly joys? If you can find no pleasure in doing his will upon the earth, how can you be prepared to serve him forever in heaven? Surely his life was such a lovely pattern of excellence, that every sanctified heart must feel a desire to imitate it; his purpose was so disinterested, that every benevolent mind must desire to adopt the same motive; his enjoyments were so pure as to give pleasure to every virtuous spirit. Then, Christian, see what your Saviour has done; and go thou, and do likewise.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SUCCESS AND REWARDS OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

When a man has undertaken any enterprize, his disposition is to put forth all his energy and to press into the service every help he can bring to bear upon his object. He starts with the full expectation of abundant success; and if he obtains it not, he is chagrined and disappointed, and perhaps discouraged from further efforts. This is apt to be the case, whether we are in pursuit of some temporal good for ourselves, or are seeking the spiritual advantage of others.

With the first object, I have at present nothing to do; but the other, whereby we most effectually serve and glorify our Maker, has been the chief subject of these pages. And when an individual has that for his purpose, it is proper he should summon up all his powers, and what he has to do, to do it with his might. And when we have done this, it is right we should expect a reward in seeing the fruit of our labors; and a reward we shall surely have, if we have labored in the true spirit: no ser-

vice rendered in faith and love fails of producing a harvest in the end, though he that sowed the seed, may not always be the one to gather in the sheaves.

But it is not right that we should be disheartened, and faint, and be discouraged from further efforts, if we do not receive the expected increase so soon, or in such abundance, as we had anticipated. Our own expectations are generally too sanguine, and it is seldom that it would be good for ourselves, to have them fulfilled to the extent we desire. God knows far better than we can, what is the most for our advantage and what is the most for his own glory; and if, as we should, we have labored with a single eye to that, we shall be willing to leave the result to him, knowing that he will order all for the best: and we should feel full confidence that we shall reap in the end if we faint not. We should remember, that the Lord's ways are far above our ways, and that his thoughts are higher than our thoughts: we cannot know what it is his design that we shall accomplish; but we know, that he is able to effect his own purpose, and if we labor with prayer and in faith, we may hope that he will condescend to use

us as the instruments. It should be our desire to do his will, and when that end is attained, we should feel that we have our reward.

And this is his will, that repentance and remission for sin should be preached in the name of Jesus among all nations; and this is *his* command, "Go ye into all the earth and preach the Gospel to every creature." This was given to the first disciples, has descended to all who have lived since, and has come down even to us at the present day; and, it will continue its claim for obedience upon all the followers of Christ, till the happy time shall come when the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdom of our Lord. When no one need say to his brother, know the Lord, because, all shall know him from the least even to the greatest; then, shall the disciple of Jesus be no more required to be diligent in spreading the report of a crucified Redeemer. But till then, the Gospel is in his hands, and the command should be binding upon his conscience. Let him then do his duty to his Saviour, and that Saviour will not withhold the reward. If he labors in faith and love, he need not fear that the recompense will be

withheld: and if he live not to see its fruit in this world, it will surely be revealed to his joy in the latter day.

I would here turn again to the example of the blessed Redeemer. He was content to labor long, and to meet with but little success to cheer him on his earthly pilgrimage; shall not we be satisfied with a like measure of success? If we had the same proportioned to our merits, we should have little indeed. Jesus had then, as he now has, the power to change every heart, and had it been but his own selfish gratification which he sought, he would doubtless have done it: and we, like him, should be satisfied with the portion which his wisdom sees fit to allot us, knowing, as we should, that it will be such a measure as will be best for ourselves and for those for whom we labor. We should be willing to do our part, and then leave the result with God; even as the farmer sows his seed, and then patiently waits till the Almighty send the early and the latter rain to start the germ and to bring forth the blade, and his sun to mature the grain, assured, that in due time, his care will be repaid by an abundant harvest.

He does not neglect to plant his fields be-

cause he knows not whether he shall live to reap the fruits; but he does his part in its proper season, trusting, if he does not himself, those who come after him will, bind the sheaves when the grain shall be matured. He knows not in what abundance he or they shall reap: but he knows in general, that the increase will be according to his own diligence and care. And so should the disciple of Jesus be ready to sow the good seed of the word in full faith, that it will not be in vain, and without caring whether himself or some other shall gather the matured fruits into his Lord's garner. But like the farmer, he must know, and this should stimulate his zeal, that, according as he faithfully performs his part, shall himself or those who may follow him, be blest by seeing an abundant harvest.

The farmer again in his old age, will plant trees which it will take long to mature, and of which in the course of nature he knows that he can never see the produce; but he does it not the less cheerfully on that account, and he does it in full confidence that his labor will not be in vain. And should not the disciple of Jesus, in like manner, be willing to cultivate a spiritual field, when there is no prospect that in this world he will see the result of his toil;

but when he knows that as God in his Providence sends his rain to nourish the tender seedling, until having attained maturity it yields its golden harvest; so will he of his great mercy, send the refreshing showers of his grace, to nourish the seed of truth sown in faith by any of its servants, until it grows, and in due time ripens its richer fruits of spiritual joys.

And in this, has the laborer in the spiritual vineyard the advantage over the earthly husbandman: the latter looking only to this world, must feel that soon his darkened eyes will be unable to behold the produce of his toil, even, after it has matured in its perfection. But the other hopes that when the clods of the valley are heaped over his earthly remains, his glorified spirit, happy in his Saviour's bosom, will be able to look down upon the field of his former labor and see it give its rich sheaves to be gathered by those who follow him; and that he shall then hear and join in the glad shouts of triumph at every new addition to the fruitful harvest.

Jesus so loved the beings he had created, so pitied the miseries of a lost world, that he was willing to make any sacrifice, to endure any

labor, and to suffer every pain, in order to save mankind. And while on earth, it was doubtless his greatest pleasure to see these lost sheep coming back to his fold. And he had it in his power, to convince every mind and to change every heart; and yet, we cannot find that through his whole ministry, though assisted by his twelve apostles and seventy other teachers, that more than one in ten thousand of his own countrymen, were led to seek the salvation he freely offered to all; and from the Gentile nations, scarce an individual was gathered to his fold. And if he denied himself such pure enjoyment, shall his disciples repine, if to the extent he may desire, his Lord does not see fit to fulfil his expectations? For wise purposes, we may be sure, it was so ordered in the ministry of the Saviour; and his servants may be equally certain, that where they are concerned, the same Omniscient Being will order every thing for the best. The all-perfect Son of God could not have suffered in his own character by multiplied successes; but which of his followers dare say, that in his own case, they would not excite such vain glory, as would prove the destruction of his soul.

In nothing, do we see the vastness of the Almighty mind more strongly contrasted with

the littleness of man's reason. Knowing him to be a benevolent as well as a holy Being, possessing unlimited power; and consequently, desiring the happiness of each one of his creatures, and able to secure it by such a constraining influence of his Spirit, as would turn all from the paths of sin into the ways of righteousness, we should say it would be better to pour out the Spirit in such a measure, that all must become holy and of course happy. We see but a few of his creatures, but God has an universe to govern: if we were to do as we desire, even the wisest and best of us, for a single day, it might be followed by the ruin of worlds. He must balance the claims of justice and mercy, for both attributes belong to the character of a Holy God. He must not sacrifice the one in the exercise of the other, or, he might unhinge the universe which he governs. That might return to the chaos from which he formed it; or perhaps, a worse than chaotic darkness might come over the whole moral creation. It is enough for us to know, that the Judge of all the earth will do right.—When we see any individual rushing heedlessly on towards the gates of death, we cannot but think it must be better for him, if God would constrain him to turn from his evil ways

to secure eternal happiness. We can hardly doubt that it is so; but while his mind continues rebellious, every measure of God's Spirit is poured upon him in vain. We do right to pray that his heart may be subdued, and God doubtless has the power to do it. He wisely does it, by not interfering with the free agency of the individual; but by softening the stubborn heart in the furnace of affliction, that the Spirit may mould it to the image of the Saviour. His ways are far different from our ways, but shall we then say, that we are more wise, more pitiful, more forgiving than he?

We should make but bungling rulers to an universe: if any thing went wrong, we should be setting it right by main force, as we would lift a log over a fence. But God's way is, to perfect the machinery that it may go right of itself. Our's would be but the blind exercise of power, but He uses unerring wisdom to dirict his resistless strength; and here we see the perfect skill of the Great Architect of the universe: for, while we see no way but to aim directly at our object, He touches some distant spring which appears to us to have no bearing upon it, and wheel revolves upon wheel, and spring acts upon spring through a complicated chain of the most perfect combination; and

when we see the result, we cannot but acknowledge, that he does all things well. When we would convert a sinner, we directly attack his prejudices, and this he stubbornly resists ; and yet, the word of truth may make some impression upon his mind : and God, in answer to our prayers, may cause it to take hold upon his heart. And how does *he* do it ? Perhaps, he sends some afflictive dispensation, that that, which has been harder than the nether millstone, may learn to feel. He disappoints some earthly project, that the man may have time to consider ; conviction follows consideration, and conversion succeeds conviction : and our prayers are answered in a way we never thought of, and when perhaps, we have passed into eternity, or are far removed from the object of our solicitude.

For instance, a disciple of Jesus is crossed in his path upon the mountains of Vermont, by a worldly-minded man, and he seizes the opportunity to urge upon him the interest of his immortal soul. The man of God goes off to the far west in his Master's service ; the other, returns to his merchandize in the east. For a while he is prosperous and careless, but afflictions and disappointment await him, and he begins to think and to feel. The good seed

has heretofore lain dormant in the heart, but when the soil has been softened by the descending showers, the germ begins to start, it shoots upwards, and takes root downwards, and grows into a beautiful and stately plant, bearing an abundance of pleasant fruit. And he who planted the seed, knew not of it: they parted upon the Green Mountains, and hundreds, perhaps thousands of miles, have separated them, so that they shall see one another no more in this world. But, with joy, will they meet at the last day when he that has sown and he that has reaped, shall rejoice together. The good seed was faithfully deposited and commended to God's care; he accepted the charge, and in his own time gave the increase.

When a forest of oaks is cut down which has stood for centuries, there will spring up in their room, a thick growth of pines and other forest trees, mixed with raspberries and whortleberries, and many more humble plants.—Each of these in its turn, had probably covered the same ground and deposited its seed hundreds, and perhaps, thousands of years before. Of each little germ, God had taken care, and had preserved the machinery with which he had originally formed it so perfect, that it

could grow and form a complete plant, which would in due time bring forth its proper fruit in as much perfection as if the seed had lain in the ground but a single year. And what is the more remarkable in this, is the fact, that when man undertakes the preservation of seeds of the same kinds, they will not grow after the lapse of a very limited time. And if God thus cares for the minutest parts of the natural creation, keeping his eye upon each little grain to preserve its germ from destruction for the propagation of its kind, will he not much more regard the good seed of the word of divine truth, when it is commended to his care by any of his faithful servants! He will not lose si t of it; but will make it productive at the last, though it may lie dormant for a time. As when the towering forest was removed, whose deep shadows smothered the more humble vegetation, he sent the enlivening rays of his sun to warm the soil and to give life to the long-buried seed which lay beneath: so, when by his Providence, he has displaced the power of wordliness which with its blighting influence had overshadowed and chilled the word of truth sown in the heart, he sends the reviving beams of his Spirit to cheer and warm that

heretofore cold and barren soil, so that the long-neglected germ may sprout, and grow, and bring forth abundantly the fruits of righteousness.

When we see these wonderful effects springing from causes, which, so far as our reason can discover, have no tendency in themselves to produce them, we cannot but admire the wisdom and power of the Great Being who orders both the cause and the consequence. When we see so many things apparently contrary, working together for the happiness of his creatures, we cannot but wonder at his great goodness and mercy: when we remember that we are ourselves the recipients of these favors, we must feel the ardor of love glow in our hearts towards this infinite Jehovah, who is at once our holy Creator, our kind Benefactor, and our merciful Saviour. Having experience of his faithfulness, and having seen his power upon the hearts of others, shall we not trust him for the future: knowing that he is the truth, and that he has promised that our labors in the Lord shall not be in vain, cannot we have faith to go on steadily in our Christian course, diligently sowing the good seed! And if we see it not immediately productive of

fruit, can we not have patience to wait for the early and latter rain, in full confidence that it will yield in abundance at the last!

Here again, Christian, look at the Saviour. He was not discouraged, though he labored long and apparently with but small effect: his success was in no measure to be compared with his sufferings and his sacrifices. And if our great Example has done so, shall we not also labor with undiminished faithfulness, though our reward be small; content to know that however little apparent success we may have to encourage us, that it is greater, far greater in proportion to our merits, than the holy Jesus found to lighten *his* toil.

But still he labored in hope and in the full confidence of his reward; and a rich reward he had for all that he had done. He knew that the light he was then shedding upon the world, would continually thereafter be extending farther and farther its rays of splendor with still increasing power; till at last, it would illuminate every land, and shine brightly upon every heart. And he knew that wherever it should penetrate, peace and joy would follow. And we, if we do our part with a confiding faith, may hope that the fruit of our toil which

we see in this life, will be but a small portion of the whole; and that the circle of its effects will go on extending wider and wider, where it shall be the means, with God's blessing, of eradicating vice and implanting holiness, of removing sorrow and administering comfort.

He knew that so long as time endured, the influences of his ministry would last; and, that when time shall be no more, its effects would continue through eternity, productive of holiness and happiness to many millions, who else, in the pollution of their sins, would have been condemned to an eternity of despair. And it is not unreasonable for us to hope, that, so long as the world shall stand, our own endeavors to serve our Maker, may be productive of a continued chain of events tending to the glory of God in the relief of the temporal miseries of our fellow-creatures; and in preparing for them an entrance to the realms of eternal bliss.

And he looked forward to that day when all the elect should be gathered upon his right hand, cleansed from their sins in the fountain of his blood, and clothed in the garments of salvation. And he thought of the joy with which he would present them spotless before his Father's throne, to receive the blessings he

had purchased for them, at such an expense of suffering to himself. And do not we hope to be in that happy company; and do you not think we shall then rejoice to select from among them an offering, to present as those by our means won to the Saviour, and thus made heirs of glory!

He saw in prospect, the successive ages of bliss in which all these would be employed in singing their glad songs of praise to the great Eternal, and in eagerly relating the wonders of redeeming love: and this was his full recompense of reward. And shall we not join in these songs, and shall we have no recitals to make of the story of our salvation: and in this blessedness, shall not we be more blest, and amidst this rejoicing shall we not find more joy, if many are there, to thank us as the means by which they were made acquainted with the merits of the great Redeemer, and thus became partakers of eternal joy? And if many so appear, will not that be to us the full consummation of our bliss?

When we see a man undertaking a great enterprize with inadequate means, we may very reasonably laugh at his folly; as in the case mentioned by our Saviour of the man

who began to build a tower and was not able to complete it, all who pass would wag their heads in derision. It was with some such feeling, our blessed Lord himself was observed by the worldly wise in the days of his ministry, when they deigned to notice him at all. They saw a man in humble circumstances as regarded his earthly station, attempting to effect a great change by the mere force of moral precepts, supported alone by the perfect example of a pure and holy life. He did not seek to gain the wise, the rich or the mighty of the earth; but he passed his time in instructing the ignorant and preaching the Gospel to the poor. The doctrines which he taught, were those the most repugnant to the pride of reason and to the arrogancy of wealth and station; and of course, were such, as would appear the least likely to become acceptable to mankind, and thus secure him influence in the world. These repulsive precepts he did not seek to enforce by violence, but by the mere power of conviction and persuasion. They doubtless considered him a deluded fanatic, perhaps thought him an impostor; were such a character to appear in the present day, both names would be liberally bestowed upon him.

He came to conquer a world to himself, and

he sent forth, not his armies clad in steel with renowned, brave, and skilful leaders: but he sent poor ignorant fishermen in pairs, without money, without a second coat to their back! And they went with no earthly dependence but the staff to support their steps by the way, and unarmed, but with the word of truth.—Compared with the mighty object he wished to effect, feeble indeed and insufficient must have appeared his instruments. There is no more wonder that the worldly minds of his cotemporaries, should have despised the means he used to establish his power, than that their depraved hearts should hate the principles on which he sought to found it. It was so different from the whole of their experience, as well as from all that they saw recorded in history, that they could not understand it.

And yet he has effected a far wider spread and more abiding change on the face of society, than all who went before and than all who have followed him. How contemptible, when compared to him, appear all the great conquerors of the earth! they have passed away, and what have they left behind to show the world that they have lived? Nebuchadnezzar was the rod in the hand of the Almighty to

scourge rebellious nations, and a few lines of history tell us that he was; and they tell us of his weakness, his pride, of his folly, and his cruelty; and besides, a huge heap of rubbish is left of the great Babylon of which he boasted. Cyrus and Alexander have their names also recorded in history, but there are perhaps still less material remains, to let us know they have existed. Julius Cæsar waded through blood to the empire of the world, and not a vestige is left of his success, but its recorded story. And in our own day, one has appeared who grasped more real power than them all; but Napoleon has gone with them the same way, and left scarce more remaining, to tell us that he lived.

All these were known but as the oppressors of mankind, who seemed glad to let their names be forgotten. There was no memory of benefits conferred to endear them to their race; they have gone to meet those whom their bloody hands have hurried before them, to the fiery regions of eternal torment. Desolation and misery attended their paths through the world; and the sooner the traces of their existence are obliterated, the happier do mankind become: they subjected the bodies of men, and in the grave their dominion is forgotten.

But the Prince of Peace aimed at the heart. Make the tree good, he said, and its fruit will be good. He laid the foundation of his kingdom deep and broad; and his dominion has continued and increased to this day, correcting the morals and improving the happiness of mankind. And it shall continue increasing, till it includes the whole human family; and men shall become holy, and as happy as they are good.

And when Jesus left the world, he commanded his disciples to go forth in his name to convert all nations. They might then have looked round on their little band, and have been discouraged when they saw how few were their numbers and how feeble their strength, and when they saw arrayed against them the principalities of the world and the kingdoms of the prince of darkness. But their Master had left them full of faith and love. Gratitude glowed warm in their hearts; and those hearts panted to engage in the work their Lord had appointed them, rejoicing to spend and be spent for him. Feeble and unarmed as they were, they did not fear to go forth in his name: they went in the power of his might, and they went to conquer. To this day, are we enjoy-

ing the fruits of their victory in every comfort we possess in this world, and, in all our hopes of future glory.

Why then should we feel discouraged in entering upon the same course, in which, such noble spirits have marked out our way? We feel ourselves to be weak, but have we as much reason as had the poor ignorant fishermen of Galilee? But, they were strong in faith. And in like manner, may we become as strong as they. None of us can be more feeble, than appeared our Lord himself in the days of his ministry. The same God who was with him, will be with us also, if we seek him in sincerity: he shall be our strength, and then we shall be strong indeed.

We think there is arrayed against us a mighty power of ungodliness. There is so: but what is it compared with what the Saviour had to contend, or with what opposed his immediate followers! They labored and we have entered into their labors: how vastly have increased those who are on our side, how much less bitter, and how much less powerful, are our opponents! If then the Christian would go forth with the faith of the first disciples, he might hope for the same success; and, if all would come forward in a like spirit to the great

work, mankind would be converted in an incredibly short time. Then the arch enemy being overcome, would be bound with chains of darkness in his proper place; and peace and happiness with good will, would then universally prevail, for God would then be obeyed on earth, even as he is obeyed in Heaven.

We feel again that preaching is but a weak instrument, and it does indeed seem so. St. Paul calls it foolishness; and foolishness, it appears to be to a worldly mind. How can a few words spoken in the ear become effectual when there is arrayed against them, all the bad passions and corrupt inclinations of the heart! Should our confidence fail because of the weakness of the instrument? Or, rather should not our faith be strengthened, when we see it by the power of God, become so mighty in pulling down the strong holds of Satan? It should be sufficient for us, that the means are of God's appointing, and that upon them he has promised his blessing: and our experience testifies that here, as in all things, his promise is sure.

And prayer too must ever accompany the preaching; and to the carnal man, it may seem a still more insignificant means of accomplish-

ing any important end. But with the Christian, it is not so. Who is there that has prayed in faith, and has not proved the Almighty to be a prayer-hearing God! Who is there that loves to search out the ways of the Great Jehovah, and has not been astonished at the wonders of his Providence, and found reason to admire the wisdom, and power, and goodness of the Lord! The Christian sees that his path is dark before him; but he wrestles with his God, and in due time, and when perhaps he least expects it, the obscurity is removed and a bright spot marks out for him his way. He sees obstacles in the prospect, which he thinks it impossible he can surmount; but suddenly they are removed, and he finds that the Almighty has answered his prayers in a way he thought not of. He sees with astonishment, that God can use those instruments to clear the impediments from his path, which, to his own feeble reason, appeared least likely to assist him.

In the year 1820 there sailed from the United States, a band of Missionaries whose intention was to commence a station upon the Sandwich Islands. These were the pioneers to an untried field of labor, and to one, which

was deemed almost hopeless. And it was not without reason it was thought so; for the people were chained in the most degrading superstitions, which it was equally the interest of the chiefs and the priests to continue. Their religion consisted of a system of restrictions called Tabooas, which were made subservient alike for oppression and licentiousness.

While the Missionaries were preparing for their departure and when upon the water, they were no doubt pleading with God to open their way before them, and their friends at home were doubtless striving in prayer with him for them; but neither the one nor the other could guess in what manner he would answer their prayers. Much less, could they have thought of the instruments he would use to effect his purpose. The same God who was hearing them in America, had his hand stretched out over the islands on the other side of the earth, to make them ready for the glad tidings his servants would carry with them.

When first discovered these were the most polluted of heathen lands; and their intercourse with what are called civilized men, had but increased in the natives, their original vileness: none of their vices were diminished, but many new forms of wickedness added to

the black catalogue. The islands had long been the resort of runaway sailors, and all who wished to live free from the restraint of law; and among these, were found many of a better class as regards their standing in the world. These last visited the islands for commercial purposes, and while there, habitually gave themselves up to the most degrading debauchery: they had taught the king and the chiefs their own habits of intemperance, and together with them, passed their time in a continued round of revels and worse than beastly degradation. It was these men that God saw fit to use to make ready the way for the Ministers of his holy Gospel.

But they knew not the purpose for which it was ordained, when they convinced the king of the folly of his religion, and persuaded him to abolish the Tabooa. They did not think to establish Christianity, but they hated all religion, and wished to be rid of its restraints.—They did it not to serve God, but to secure more unrestricted licentiousness, and to forward their own schemes of avarice. But the Almighty had ordered it for his own glory, and for the good of his chosen; and the Missionaries arriving soon after, made it apparent even

to the worldling, that the hand of God had done it.

By such instances of the workings of Providence, we should be made to feel that our way is not in our own hand: and when our prospect seems hedged up before us, we should remember that he can make an opening for us by such means as we least suspect. And we cannot know, that they are not even now at work. Of one thing we may be sure, that if we are faithful to him, God will grant us such a measure of success in his service, as he shall see to be good for us; and we know in general that according to our faithfulness, will this be granted to us. And above all we should remember, that God can order every thing for his own glory: and as this should be our aim, so should it be our reward.

IN CONCLUSION,

I would address a few words to the reader. I have made a feeble attempt to set forth the love of Jesus Christ,—that love which passeth knowledge. I have spoken of the sacrifices which it led him to make, and of the sufferings which it caused him to endure, that he might open the gates of paradise for our guilty race. And I have spoken of our love to him, and of what that should make us willing to sacrifice and to do, in order that we may show a grateful sense of his goodness to us.

I do not address the impenitent, those who will not listen to, or who refuse to accept his offers of mercy. If these are willing to abide in eternal torments, in return for the dissatisfaction (I cannot call it the pleasure) of continuing in sin, I cannot expect them to feel much gratitude for offers of pardon which they will not accept, or for the promise of future happiness which they cannot enjoy.

But, Christians, those who have felt the burden of unpardoned guilt and the relief of expected mercy—Christians, who rejoice in the prospect of eternal happiness purchased for them by their Saviour's blood, I call upon to

consider, what they are willing to do in return for that Saviour's love!

If it were necessary in order to secure to you that happiness, what would you be willing to do? Or what would you not be willing to do, rather than fail of it? And shall not gratitude for the free gift, prompt you to do as much as would the hope of reward—when that gift too, is purchased for you at the price of your Saviour's agony!

A mother who had spent days of care and nights of watching on account of her child—if she had suffered pain of body and anxiety of spirit in ministering to his pleasure when in health, in nursing him in sickness and in carefully shielding him from harm at all times—would surely have some cause to complain of that child, if his love and gratitude would not prompt him to make for her the same sacrifice which an hireling would be willing to make to secure his wages! But what is a mother's love for her son, when compared with Jesus' love for his redeemed! She may forget her child: but Christian, thy Saviour cannot be forgetful of thee.

Surely there is some ground to doubt that faith which is unproductive of love, and to

distrust that love which draws back from every sacrifice!

Our Lord has taught us both by precept and example, to relieve the distressed, to comfort the afflicted, and to preach repentance to the wicked, and the glad tidings of salvation to the penitent. But he has not made our own salvation to depend upon our doing these things. These are labors of love, and he has promised to reward them as such. And he has likewise told us, that such works are the fruit and the proof of faith. But is that act, any great proof of faith or of love, which costs us no sacrifice and is the produce of no self-denial? It may do good, and it carries its reward with it, if it is intended to do good: but if we are willing to do only those things which call for the relinquishment of no part of our own ease, and which do not require the yielding up of the gratification of our vanity or our pride, can we be truly the disciples of Jesus?

After we have a comfortable provision for our own wants, if we will use more self-denial and make more effort to increase our wealth, than we should be willing to do for the cause of Christ, is it not a proof that we regard our

hoarded riches, more than our Saviour's love! If we so love Mammon, can we love God? We *know* that we cannot love both!

Again, if a man will do more for the gratification of his pride, than he will for the spread of the Gospel, which Jesus has commanded should be preached unto all men, does he not acknowledge his pride for his master, rather than his Saviour? "His servants ye are whom ye obey."

If Christians would but consider more seriously in the disposal of their time and money, I am persuaded there would be wanting neither men, nor means, for any Christian enterprize. If when they are entering upon a course of life, or making any change in their manner of living, they were to view their circumstances in reference to their Christian obligations, they would doubtless very often act differently. Were they seriously to ask, each one himself, shall I do such a thing which can only gratify my pride, or, shall I devote the money it will cost to send the Gospel to the perishing heathen—we think there could be but one answer from the Christian heart. And again, if the question was, shall I take such a

sum to spend in superfluities upon myself, or shall I devote it to the relief of a suffering Christian brother?—how would the love of Jesus prompt the reply!

Such sacrifices as these, one would think would not be much to make for him, who for our sakes, had not where to lay his head. We should not suppose, they would come hard to those whose hearts are warmed by the love of God. And yet, if such moderate acts of self-denial, were general, or even common among professed Christians, there would never be a lack of funds for any of the benevolent enterprizes of the day; neither would any servant of Jesus be languishing in poverty unrelieved.

But are even these trifling things *required* of us? Not absolutely; for God has marked out no particular line by which we are to be guided. But he has given a general principle—the principle of love, by which if we walk, we shall be sure to please him. It is this, which makes the rich man's gifts and the widow's mite acceptable, not in proportion to the amount, but according to the measure in which this was the prevailing motive, which prompted them. Thanks be to God, who has condescended to receive that from us as a free will

offering, which is but a return of a small portion of what his bounty has bestowed upon us.

God loves the gift of a cheerful heart: and if we really love God, the satisfaction derived from the thought of pleasing him, will more than counterbalance any pain our self-denial may have cost us.

It is so, likewise, when the question regards personal services. A man should not merely ask himself, "Does my duty require this?"

To a young man in choosing a profession, the question may arise with regard to his duty in preaching the Gospel. He may say, "Am I required to give up the honor and profit I might expect to gain in another profession, and devote myself to winning souls to Christ, making his pleasure my reward? Or, if I preach the Gospel, ought I to bury myself in the western wilds or go to heathen lands, when so many are perishing at home? Is it my duty, to leave the society of Christian friends—the comforts, the safety, the privileges of a Christian land—to go where the pleasures of refined society, the advantages of the Gospel and the security of civilization, are alike unknown—and where the place of these things, is supplied by the disgusting habits and the degraded manners of vicious barbarians?"

Jesus Christ did not reason thus. If he had asked, "Is it my duty to save this miserable race? Is it my duty to leave these abodes of bliss, this company of pure and happy and obedient spirits, and the immediate presence of my Father? and is it my duty, to go and dwell in contact with the sin my soul abhors, and to subject myself to the revilings of those wretched outcasts—to be familiar with their miseries, and to bear with their stubbornness." What must have been the answer to these queries? And what must we have been now, had our salvation depended upon the answer? Forever blessed shall his name be, by all the company of the redeemed; because, he did not confine himself to the straight line of his duty, but took counsel of his love.

Suppose the Apostles had reasoned thus: "Our duty is to our countrymen first. There are millions of Jews unconverted: and we ought not to leave them and go to the heathen, till these are all gathered into the Church." Had they acted upon such reasoning, what would have been the state of the inhabitants of the British Isles at this day and of their descendants in America, supposing, what in such

a case would not be at all likely, that we should have found our way hither? We should not now be living in a land of peace and plenty, of civil rights and domestic comforts—a land, in these respects, the glory of all lands. But wherever our lot should have been cast, it would have been in ignorance and depravity, and, amid scenes of violence and rapine, we should have passed our miserable existence upon the earth, while the gates of death and of hell would have yawned wide to receive us, as we passed from it.

But it was because he loved our race, notwithstanding our guilt, that the holy Jesus condescended to come to save us. It was because his heart yearned over our miseries, that he was willing to suffer himself to deliver us from them. And his first followers, emulating the love of their Master, were willing to do as he had done. Gratitude for their own redemption, urged them on to preach salvation to others, that the Saviour might reap the full reward of his sufferings. They knew that Jesus bore a love to every creature and would therefore have all men to be saved; and they hastened to spread, so far as they could, the glad tidings of salvation. Their hearts, moulded

to the image of their Master's, could not but pity the miseries of a fallen world: and therefore, their compassion was still urging them on in their work of love.

These, and others like these, were the motives we may suppose, (joined to the command of their Lord, equally binding upon us,) which induced the Apostles and first Christians to make those efforts for the spread of the Gospel, of which, the world has been realizing the happy fruits ever since. And when their spirit shall once more pervade the now extended Christian community, with the increased facilities of modern times and the blessing of the Holy Spirit, (the same in every age,) we may expect to see the Gospel progress as it did at the first, and the world speedily gathered into one fold under one Shepherd.

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